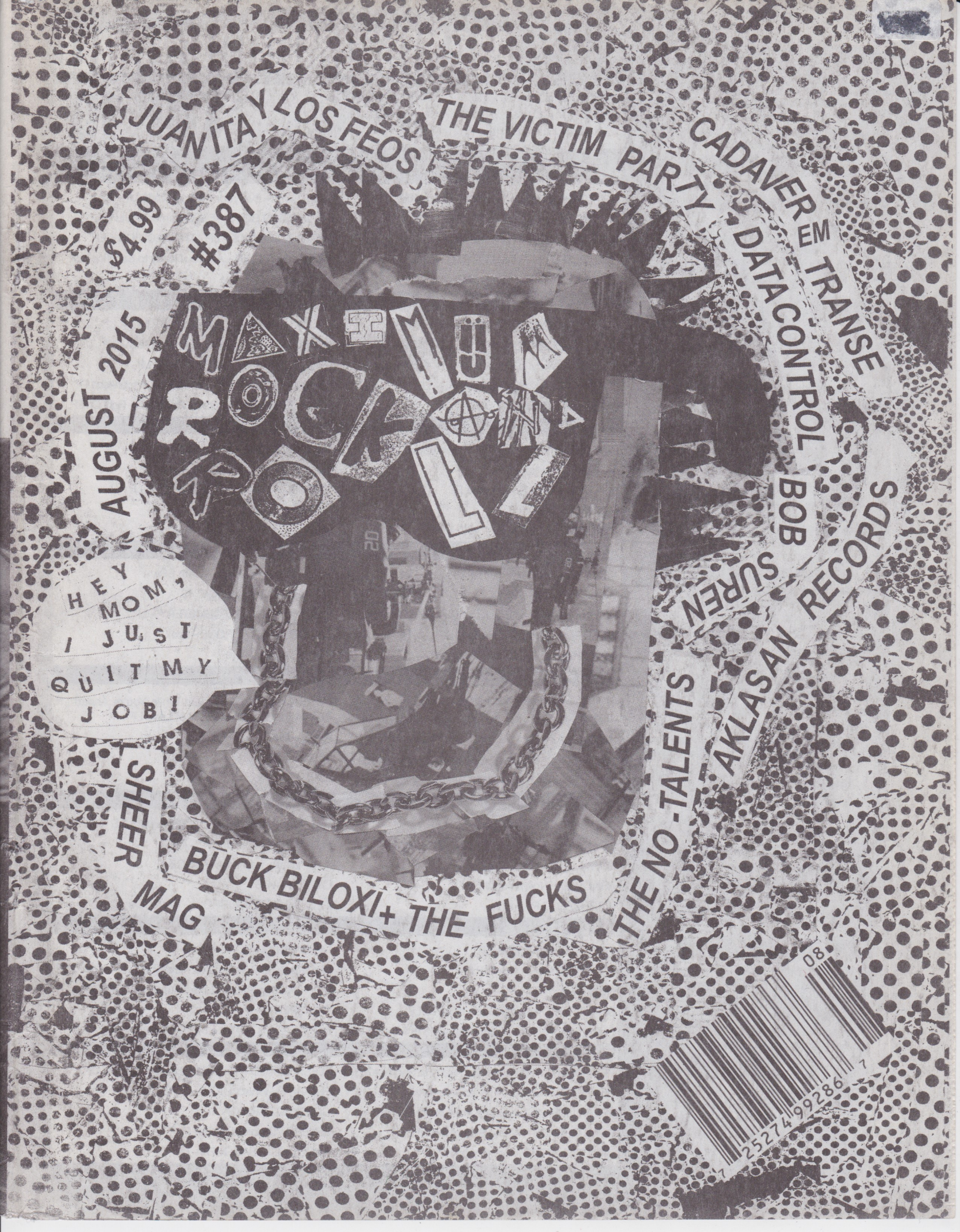
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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

For what it's worth, here're some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

GRACE AMBROSE

- NO – Treating People Like They Don't Exist 12"
- MYSTIC INANE – Ode To Joy EP
- NUN – LP / VEXX – Give and Take EP
- SHOVELS – LP / FLESH WORLD – LP, EP, & live
- BÖRN – Engan Skal Hungra EP
- SWIFTUMZ – Everybody Loves Chris LP
- DOWNTOWN BOYS – Full Communism LP
- CHROME CRANKS – LP / THE PACIFICS – EP
- PERMANENT RUIN – Are You Ready to Sacrifice? LP
- PHATIMA RUDE – live

LYDIA ATHANASOPOULOU

- AUSENCIA / TOZCOS / FUNDAMENTAL – live
- SADICOS / DRAPETOMANIA / MUTANT ITCH – live
- MOSKWA – Nigdy! LP / BLAZING EYE – No Outside EP
- KURRAKA – LP / CHROME CRANKS – LP
- DVA MINUTA MRŽNJE – both EPs
- KUUDES SILMÄ – Kuolemaa EP / NO – 12"
- NIGHTERS – EP / NATURAL CAUSES – LP
- TRAGIEDIA – LP / KALTE LUST – LP
- PERMANENT RUIN – LP / ABNORMI – Noidankehä EP
- BÖRN – Engan Skal Hungra EP / HERPES – Fight On EP

MATT BADENHOP

- DOWNTOWN BOYS – Full Communism LP
- MOSKWA – Nigdy! LP
- BLAZING EYE – No Outside EP
- NARCOESTADO – CS
- DVA MINUTA MRŽNJE – both EPs
- KUUDES SILMÄ – Kuolemaa EP
- BÖRN – EP and live
- TRAGIEDIA – Punk 'Til Destruction LP
- WARHEAD – LP
- NIGHTERS – Drop Down Dead EP

WILL BLOMQUIST

- KUUDES SILMÄ – Kuolemaa EP
- WARHEAD – LP
- PLASTIC CAVES – "Dispossessed/Cold Remains"
- NIGHTERS – Drop Down Dead EP
- GAS CHAMBER – Stained Hand EP
- DVA MINUTA MRŽNJE – both EPs
- REPAIRS – "Decay/Cycle" 45
- BLAZING EYE – EP / CEMETERY – LP
- BROCRUSHER / CRONE – live
- KOBAN / VATS – live

MITCH CARDWELL

- SWIFTUMZ – Everybody Loves Chris LP
- FLESH WORLD – The Wild Animals In My Life LP
- BALLROOM – 12"
- DAWN OF HUMANS – Slurping at the Cosmos Spine LP
- HANK WOOD & THE HAMMERHEADS – Stay Home!! LP
- ACTION SWINGERS – Quit While You're Ahead LP
- BLACK TIME – Aerial Gobs of Love LP
- RAYS – live
- NOTS – live
- EX-CULT – live

ROBERT COLLINS

- GAS CHAMBER – Stained Hand EP
- CRAP – CS / SPACE IS HAUNTED – CS
- BÖRN – Engan Skal Hungra EP
- ABNORMI – Noidankehä EP
- WARHEAD - LP
- GORILLAxMONSOON / VEXED – split CS
- FLESH WORLD – LP, EP, & live
- V/A – Death Trap From Hell CD
- LITOVSK – CS
- DESERT OF TOMORROW – both CDs

LAYLA GIBBON

- VEXX – Give and Take EP
- MYSTIC INANE – Ode To Joy EP
- NUN – LP
- BLACK TIME – Aerial Gobs of Love LP
- FLESH WORLD – The Wild Animals In My Life LP
- PEACH KELLI POP – LP
- SHOVELS – LP / SWIFTUMZ – Everybody Loves Chris LP
- NO – Treating People Like They Don't Exist LP
- THE SPLITS – II LP
- DOWNTOWN BOYS – Full Communism LP

DAN GOETZ

- PERMANENT RUIN – Are You Ready to Sacrifice? LP
- DOWNTOWN BOYS – Full Communism LP
- FREAK VIBE – "Cuss Gang/Jesus in the Kitchen"
- SAVAGEHEADS – Wrong Side of the Law EP
- BRUDTE LØFTER – Køvenhabn EP
- FLESH WORLD – The Wild Animals In My Life LP
- FLEABITE – What's Up EP
- CLOCKED OUT – LP
- SEVERE – Distorted Views LP
- SNOOTY GARBAGEMEN – LP

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COVER DESIGN: Emmy Ramone, back cover photo of HIRS at Smash It Dead Fest by Angela Owens.

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

GREG HARVESTER

RATS REST – Hedonite 45	FREAK VIBE – "Cuss Gang/Jesus in the Kitchen"
VEXX – Give and Take EP	SCUMRAID – Rip Up EP
TENEMENT – Predatory Headlights 2xLP	NATURAL CAUSES – LP
50 MILLION – CS	BÖRN – Engan Skal Hungra EP
MYSTIC INANE – Ode To Joy EP	PHATIMA RUDE – live

KENNY KAOS

WARM SODA – Symbolic Dream LP	ACTION SWINGERS – Quit While You're Ahead LP
PEACH KELLI POP – LP	DOWNTOWN BOYS – Full Communism LP
DER FADDEN – "Best Guess/Filaments"	JIM TABLOWSKI EXPERIENCE – Home Street Home EP
BAD WEED – Hillside EP	THE PACIFICS – Say You Love Me EP
MAKEOUTS – Svarta Läder EP	BUMMER'S EVE – Fly on the Wall/Blue

CAROLYN KEDDY

SWIFTUMZ – Everybody Loves Chris LP	VEXX – Give And Take EP / FREAK VIBE – Cuss Gang 45
BLACK TIME – Aerial Gobs Of Love LP	DAWN OF HUMANS – Slurping At The Cosmos Spine LP
THE PACIFICS – Say You Love Me EP	PISSE – Mit Schinken durch die Menopause LP
MARY BELL – Vultures EP / FLEABITE – What's Up EP	NUN – LP / REMA-REMA – Entry/Exit 12"
PERMANENT RUIN – Are You Ready To Sacrifice? LP	Lee Scratch Perry's Vision Of Paradise – film

RAY LUJAN

DER FADDEN – "Best Guess/Filaments"	NUN – LP / TOMBOY – Sweetie LP
DOWNTOWN BOYS – Full Communism LP	TOXIC REASONS – Essential Independence CD/DVD
LAURICE – Best of Vol. 2 LP	WARM SODA – Symbolic Dream LP
LEGENDARY WINGS – Do You See? LP	TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET – live
MARY BELL – Vultures EP	UK SUBS – live / REFUSED – live

FRED SCHRUNK

DOWNTOWN BOYS – Full Communism LP	DAWN OF HUMANS – Slurping at the Cosmos Spine LP
SHEER MAG – Fan The Flames EP	HANK WOOD & THE HAMMERHEADS – Stay Home!! LP
FLESH WORLD – EP & LP	ANASAZI – Nasty Witch Rock LP
PISSE – 12" / KURRAKA – LP	SWIFTUMZ – Everybody Loves Chris LP
VEXX – EP / MYSTIC INANE – EP	RATS REST – Hedonite 45

LENA TAHMASSIAN

KUUDES SILMÄ – Kuolemaa EP	SAVAGEHEADS – Wrong Side of the Law EP
DVA MINUTA MRŽNE – Došao Je Kraj EP	KÜKEN – LP
BAD WEED – Hillside EP	UNA BÈSTIA INCONTROLABLE – live
MOSKWA – Nigdy! LP	WARSONG – live
THE PACIFICS – Say You Love Me EP	JOYRIDE! – live

ELI WALD

MYSTIC INANE — Ode to Joy EP	NUN — LP
NO — Treating People Like They Don't Exist LP	SHEER MAG — Fan the Flames EP
VEXX — Give and Take EP	SCUMRAID — Rip Up EP
FLESH WORLD — The Wild Animals In My Life LP	BLACK TIME — Aerial Gobs Of Love LP
PURE DISGUST — Chained EP	SHOVELS — LP

ZINE TOP TEN

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MRR BACK ISSUES AND RENEWALS

LIKE WHAT YOU'RE READING IN MRR #387? HERE'S SOME RECOMMENDED READING FROM THE MRRchive:

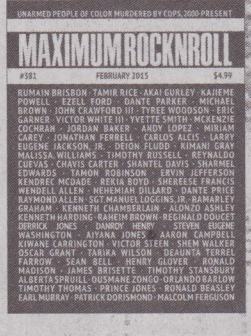
MRR #242/July '03. Pensacola and San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, **Bob Suren**, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

"A lot of people don't know this, but I'm going to divulge, I am a third degree black belt in Hopkido and I studied martial arts for over twenty years, and I'm not kidding. I haven't worked out lately, but I've still got the moves."

MRR #291/Aug '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannan, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photospread, Kawakami/Disclose obituary, **Brazil scene report.**

"For being a mega-metropolis and one of the most populous cities of Latin America, bands are what we have a lot of."

MRR #375/Aug '14. Iberian powerhouse Una Bèstia Incontrolable, 20th anniversary of Mpls's Extreme Noise Records, Leningrad punk progenitor Svin, Texas's Glue, Vèrtigo from Barcelona, Australia's Cool Death Records, Japan's Eiefits and Thee Mighty Fevers, Serbian rock 'n' rollers S.U.S., Miscalculations from the UK, Canada's Born Wrong, two photo spreads inculding the **Total Punk Total Fuck Off Fest (try and spot BUCK BILOXI)**, and a special "New Blood" spread. Cover by Jordan Poggerpants.



MRR #381/Feb '15. The Pacific Northwest's Hysterics, Liz Panella of Earth Girls with Scott Plant of Broken Prayer, Oslo's Dark Times, **Accidente (Madrid Contemporaries of Juanita y los Feos)**, London's Quango, Vancouver's Vacant State, Mallorca's Metadona label, Toronto's Not Dead Yet fest, Wiccans from TX, and an Iceland scene report with Reykjavik's Börn.

RECENT BACK ISSUES: MRR's Latest and Greatest

MRR #382/Mar '15

2014 Year-End Top 10s! Plus, legendary SST producer Spot, NYHC rippers In School, shit liking Pig DNA, and a scene report from Grenoble, France.

MRR #383/Apr '15

Comics and Art! Edited by Alex Simon. Featuring art by Lisa Czech, Maren Karlson, Sara Abruña, Shiva Addanki, Laura Pallmall, Nathan Ward, and many more.

MRR #384/May '15

Olympia's G.L.O.S.S., Bay Area powerhouse Violence Creeps, Spain's Trance, SMZB from China, Fat Creeps, Chicago's Black and Brown Punk Shows, the Is This Venue Accessible? website, San Diego punk doc It's Gonna Blow, and Finland's Vivisektio.

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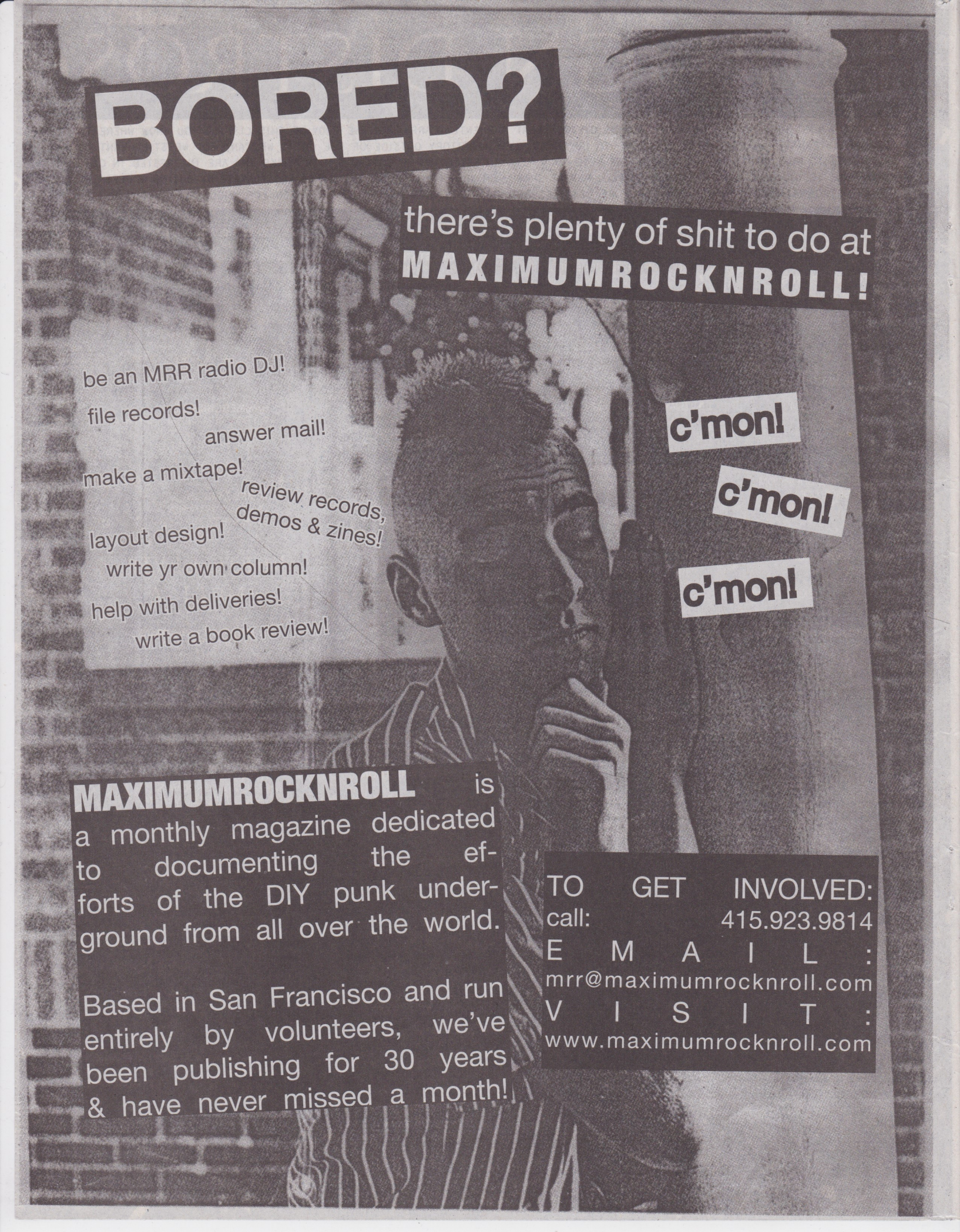
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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear Grace,

Here is the long-promised Meltdown LP—I hope it finds you well and having good springtime days. Happy to report also that I found 60+ copies of the LP in Rochester, though none of these had covers. We planned pretty badly with those—printing 500 exactly without realizing the pressing plant had sent an additional 75 copies. Then we ran out of yellow ink and instead of buying more we printed the last 30-40 in red instead and gave them to friends. The one included here was my sister's copy. Anyway, I talked to everyone in Meltdown and we're going to make a new version of the cover for these last copies.

Also in Rochester I found this Three LP with some familiar green tape so I am returning it to *MRR* even though I'm guessing it was purged intentionally. I probably bought this in the mid/late '90s in Portland.

Anyway, really glad this Meltdown LP is welcome at *MRR*. One of the members of the band reminded me that we decided not to send a review copy because the review of the 7" was so harsh ("avoid at all costs"). Besides the absent pages of classified ads, which I miss reading, I think *MRR* is the best it's ever been, or at least since I started reading it. Thank you for that.

Bests,

Ethan

One man's *"avoid at all costs" is another woman's "mandatory exultant sounds of teenage possibility!" If readers don't know, Meltdown was a band in opposition to the power chord, aggressive No Wave freakouts from the minds of four teenage girls in the mid '90s in Washington, D.C. They recorded one 7" with Guy Picciotto and released an LP (*The Map*) made up of more tracks recorded at the Pirate House and a live four-track recording of a night at the Black Cat courtesy of Brendan Canty.*

I discovered this band when I was a teenager in the Washington, D.C. area myself, at a time when I was spending as many nights in that formative venue as I could. I never saw anything like this then. Hearing it was revelatory. This happened there! (Or really, in the old Black Cat, just three doors down from the one I spent time in. Did it have a black and white checkered floor too?) And it was made by girls like me! I suppose I can understand why someone might tell the world to "avoid at all costs"—you're either going to run out of the room when it comes on or glue yourself to the front of the stage. But isn't all of the most genius music like that? I'd rather listen to this than most of the stuff this rag was championing in the '90s... "I'm going to melt you down into little balls of flesh"—so creepy and so cool! It's difficult and threatening, so it's been erased. Too essential to be forgotten! I wanna interview these women for the mag. The original record includes lyrics to two songs inside of a beautiful letter-pressed sleeve. I want them all in your new version! They are incredible and poetic, rallying cries, soundtracks to destruction!

In my column a few months back, I wrote about how we didn't have these records here—thanks to your and former coord Golnar's donations, we now have the complete Meltdown discography in the record collection (47,683 records and counting...). We'll be publishing an MRR *want list in the not-so-distant future, so punks of the world, keep your eye out and help us fill in the gaps...And pick this record up when Ethan & co get it out in the world again. A must for fans of autodidacts, Inflatable Boy Clams, lawless experimentation, a compelling argument for no boys on guitars, and a reminder that what is old can still sound new again...*

—Grace

Dear *MRR*,

I was eager to read part two of Blow Blood's Sex Dwarf tour diary in last month's *MRR* because the show in Minneapolis was at my house! That show was insane (despite several other shows going on that night—but that's typical Minneapolis fare). I remember the folks in Sex Dwarf telling me it was their favorite of the tour thus far. I will admit we don't often do "crustier" shows but I made a real effort with this one. You know...to reach out because I'd hate for the house to be pigeon-holed (or in our town "rat-holed") with a certain "kind" of punk. It's something I'm constantly fighting against in this city of like...a million punks.

Honestly it was a pain in my ass because I was diagnosed with strep throat earlier that day and *all eight* of my roommates were either working at First Ave. (yes, the club made famous by Prince) or five blocks away watching Nots and Solid Attitude. I took my antibiotics, I drank a fuckload of weirdo immune potions combined with weed tincture and was ready to party my fucking studs off. But then as I went to read your pretty bland description of the party you say, "It felt like we were at a house party of teenagers whose parents had gone away for the weekend. It was a bit of a token suburban deal and not a dumpy punk house (the better kind of house)."

I was looking forward to what you had to say about my house because I work really hard booking shows sometimes even five times a month (which yes, involves cleaning up after them). I was hoping you would show to the *MRR* world a bit of what's hot in Minneapolis these days. *No,* my parents were not on vacation. *And no,* I am not a teenager. I am punk as fuck and I own my house for the reason of supporting high-asses like yourself and your endeavors in DIY. So if you ever come back to Minneapolis please hit us up again and feel free to look a little deeper into whats really going on here.

As for that rando "older" drunk guy? I had to eventually kick him out for going behind the bar and drinking all the leftover whiskey.

—The Salty Bartender of Pork Ave.
South Minneapolis

P.S. We also took down a wall in the basement so more than 30 people fit down there.

To the Salty Bartender of Pork Ave,

I kept the description of the house short. It wasn't meant as a negative or an insult, just a quick way to describe the venue I'd walked into. I'm sorry if you felt it was implied that you were a teenager whose parents are on vacation. I'm sure you're punk as fuck (honestly I couldn't give a crap how punk you are, it's not how I go about valuing people!). It was a cool show and the bar you have down there is also really neat. Dumpy punk houses are good to party and have shows in because you don't have to feel bad about minor damage that might happen to the space when moshing hard or chugging beer or whatever. In terms of general living, your house was great. So take it how you want to, but it wasn't any sort of personal attack on you or your lifestyle or how punk you are.

I didn't mean to make you feel undervalued, although I can understand the feeling of working hard to contribute to the punk scene only to have other punks rip on it, like I'm sure thousands of other punks around the world can

also relate to.

I hope your strep throat didn't last long, and thanks for having the show there.

Signing out,

The High-Ass of DIY

Hey Salty Bartender,

Thanks for writing in and for reminding us that this is a magazine with a global audience—we wanna represent punks all over the world as best we can! Of course, everything in here is just one person's opinion, so take it with a grain of salt! The sweetest form of redemption would be writing a Minneapolis scene report for us. Shitworkers Ben and Shivaun, I'm also putting you on blast to team up and do this! (You know this anonymous tipster—I'm sure they'll reveal themselves to you in time…)

I am psyched to come to Minneapolis for the first time this summer. Take me to Extreme Noise and then let's pogo at the Ivy/Lumpy show. I hear I can float in a tube somewhere with a frosty alcoholic drink? Let's do that too. Looking forward to writing about all your city has to offer in these pages soon.

—Grace

I just read Ray Suburbia's column on being crazy (#385) and it inspired me to write about my own struggles with mental illness.

First I do not call myself crazy, I have had enough people call me that in my life that I do not need to add fuel to the fire. I do not really call myself mentally ill as well. I do not like to rely on labels and broad terms to help others understand what I go through because the fact is I do not know what I am going through.

I have Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and it started when I was a kid. I did not like touching certain things or having certain people touch me or my things. I do not know how it started it was just there. In my midteens it got worse—blame my lack of social skills (something I was treated for as a child), early drinking or some bad experiences I had, it just kinda blew up in my face.

Taking showers till the water ran cold, using large bottles of body wash and lotion in a matter of days, trying to feel clean but never feeling clean enough. I went to counseling, I did not know what was going on and could not even explain it to myself and I did not feel safe trying to explain it to a professional.

In my late teens I just shut myself off, I slept a lot, stayed in my room where I felt safe. My dad would call me Howard Hughes (to this day I cannot watch the *Aviator* and in fact it makes me cry when it is brought up). I withdrew.

In my twenties I stayed to myself. I could not work a normal job, my parents helped me out. I tried making friends. I tried a long distance relationship (because it felt okay). I went to school, learned some stuff. started writing for a few publications and just tried. My sister died when I was 23 (she was 22) in a car accident and after that I really pushed myself to be a good daughter, I got a part time job in the mall and just tried. My long distance relationship ended—it was more of a phone/email friend at that point than anything romantic. I met my current boyfriend and tried to adjust with having someone in my life on a physical level.

Opening myself up to my boyfriend over the last nine years and showing him who I am has led me to come out of the mental health closet. I write about OCD (in my zine *The Stay At Home Girlfriend*), I talk about it and try to educate people every day. Not everyone is going to get that I have to make sure I touch the door seven times, or like music in the car playing to quiet the noise in my head but whatever. In a society that judges you by the paycheck you bring home, how many friends you have and your material possessions I feel worthless on my low days. I will be 36 this month and still cannot work a "real" job, I still get help from my parents, and some days the only people I feel like talking to are my cats.

Every day is a struggle, worrying about germs, times of the day, and people saying the wrong thing really adds up. I get a reoccurring outbreak of shingles and sometimes depression has me wrecked. I have been in and out of therapy my whole life and I am currently looking for a new therapist who will possibly show me how to live with less anxiety.

For now I write my zines, talk to people and try to educate them on mental health issues, pet cats and do yoga. I take each day hour by hour and try to live for the hour. I breathe deeply and just hang in there. I hope you can hang in there too!

—MissMuffcake (Kendy P.)

All the power and solidarity to you MissMuffcake! It's not all that often that us columnists get direct feedback on what we write—and even rarer when it doesn't have a "fuck you" somewhere in it. I'm 33 myself, and I totally understand how hard its being "an adult" dealing with brain stuff that tries so very hard to keep you from achieving all those things that our society says you need to check off to be all grown up. All you can do is try and work. Sometimes slip, sometimes overcome. Personally, thank you so much for putting your story out there. The more visible people like us are, the better. Writing that column was pretty scary for me because of all the people I know that I knew would read it, and possibly look at me/treat me differently afterwards. But I felt I had to so that I would feel a little less alone, and that hopefully other people like me would as well. So, again, thank you very much. Keep yr head up and fuck the world. Don't let anyone call you crazy if you don't like it. Hell, don't let let anyone call you anything you don't want to be called. All we got is ourselves (and hopefully, other punks) on this stupid punishment orb, so let's be loud and make the best of this bullshit!

—Ray

P.S. You should totally send yr zine in to be reviewed. I'm sure people would want to read it. I know I do.

Dear *MRR*,

Because of my current situation (one and a half years left on five for selling one pound of chronic), I have only two sources for DIY punk/HC. One source is my friend's radio show on KTEQ College radio and the other is print media, with *MRR* and *Razorcake* leading the way (somebody please persuade Dan to bring *Profane Existence* back to print!).

Over a year ago Mariam Bastani and Mykel Board had a "spat" which resulted with Mykel being fired after 30 years as a contributor to *MRR*. Mykel Board was one of the best colunists in *MRR* history. I was very let down by the decision to fire Mykel and I did not renew my subscription to *MRR*. A year later I decided to renew my subscription and give the magazine another chance. Then in the May issue (#384) I saw that Grace Ambrose fired George Tabb and I was very disappointed once again.

I waited nearly three months before writing this so it would not be full of "Fuck you!", "Fuck off!", and "Eat shit and die!" type statements. I have been guilty of reactionary behavior in the past and did not want to make these same mistakes. The decisions to fire Mykel Board and George Tabb were reactionary responses to situations which should have been handled in a more positive manner. And yes, I am fully aware of the "facts" and other information which led to them being fired (there was a fourteen month period where I had web access which ended about a year ago).

As a reader of *MRR* for decades, I always enjoyed George Tabb's columns, and I also read his first book, *Playing Right Field*. George's column was always informative, humorous and entertaining. Both he and Mykel Board could always be counted on to provide a great column. Those contributions are some of the best ever to be included in the pages of *MRR*. Grace Ambrose was wrong in firing George. I guess consideration for reader preferences means nothing to the dictators at *MRR*. And to clarify, I am not questioning the decision to refuse printing of the disputed column, which led to George being fired. If Grace felt she was upholding the integrity of *MRR* by not printing George's submission, I support that decision.

The dispute between George and Grace should have ended when George submitted a new column. This was a "behind the scenes" type of disagreement which should not have resulted with George being fired. As far as I know, this "spat" was not made public by George and would have had no impact on *MRR* or its readers if Grace had not reacted the way she did.

I do realize how difficult it must be to be a *MRR* coordinator and it is probably a thankless job. I also have to assume that it can

be a "no win" type of situation, since there is always somebody who is not satisfied with a coordinator's decisions. But reactionary behavior, such as firing George, is not acceptable. I suggest a *MRR* coordinator should "thicken one's skin" if you are going to take on those responsibilities. That said, it must be pointed out that I would not be able to do Grace's job. I have the dedication, but there is no way I would be able to put up with all of the responsibilities as *MRR* coordinator.

I have booked and provided sound for more than 300 DIY punk/HC shows over a thirteen-year period. And as a former venue owner, I have been guilty of this same type of reactionary behavior. I stand by most of those decisions, but there were a few situations I should have handled in a more positive manner, just like Grace should have handled this dispute with George in a better way.

In the endnotes from her May column, Grace states that it was "appropriate that the writer who used the word 'pussy' as an epithet in these pages more than anyone else penned his last column in an issue so full of righteous omen, am I right?" No Grace, you are not "right," it was ironic. And in my opinion it was very sadly ironic. But this statement from Grace is revealing. In my opinion, this statement indicates there was more to "firing" George than a simple dispute over his column. Given the direction this magazine has gone in recent times, and other comments by Grace, it appears she views George as an enemy to women or some other "threat" to the political correctness of *MRR*. In the June issue (#385) Grace makes the statement "...trust no man." Of course I do not take her statement literally, just like Grace should afford the same consideration towards George's use of the word "pussy."

Personally, I have never taken George to be serious whenever he used the word "pussy" in his column. Knowing his style of writing and his decades of involvement with punk, I always assumed he used the word "pussy" in mock of people who employ the word seriously in a negative way. I am not going to delve into an exhaustive rant about "not enough" or "too much" political correctness. I do realize how people can be offended by the negative usage of the word pussy. But I am going to reference the June #385 issue agin. In that issue of *MRR*, "ML" served up Di V with an appropriate response while describing her as somebody who is "a frustrated social critic blinded by your reactionary, quasi-fascist PC 'punk bubble.'" I apply that same description to Grace Ambrose regarding George Tabb using the word "pussy" in his column.

In the March issue (#382), Ralf of MDX inquired about imagery in adverts from *MRR*. In particular, Ralf mentioned "The Nazi Eagle combined with the Circle A?", "The Runes of the Nazi SS", "Anarcunt?" and questioned why they were in *MRR*. Myself, I noticed the same images, but I realized *MRR* would probably have made sure the sources of these adverts were not promoting or implying fascism, etc. But at the same time, I would totally expect somebody from Germany to at least inquire about them.

There were three responses to Ralf's letter. Ramona Deepthroat of Nightrider records responded in typical reactionary fashion and also related that the "imperial eagle" has been around since Roman times (as if the Romans were a great example to legitimize the use of the "imperial eagle"). Sister Shame of Rawpussy also reacted with snide comments towards Ralf. Both of these responses were typical reactionary comments (although arguably very "punk"), from persons who could be considered to be a "frustrated social critic blinded by your quasi-fascist PC 'punk bubble!'" The third response to Ralf came from Lydia and was a perfect explanation of why those adverts were allowed in *MRR*. To quote Lydia, "Are we to censor what some might knowingly call 'poor taste'? Are we to condone those wanting to 'shock and offend' when that clearly might not be the case?" Lydia also stated, "Lest we forget that one person's 'too PC' is another person's 'not PC enough." Perhaps Grace should have applied this type of consideration to George Tabb prior to attacking him for using the word "pussy" in his columns. Am I right?

It must be clarified that I do appreciate Grace's column and her contributions to *MRR*. And I always liked Mariam's columns as well as her sets on the radio show. Mariam never fails to play ripping tunes. (Rotten Ron gets a "fuck yeah" too.) I cannot really recall any times Mariam or Grace really offended me at all other than their decisions to fire Mykel Board and George Tabb. Grace's outlook on Gilman allowing Green Day to play that benefit show is spot on! I especially like her point that "if Green Day wans to support the victims, they can write a check (with a net-worth in the millions, they probably need the tax write-off, yeah?), or play a different venue and donate the proceeds (there are certainly many larger, better equipped spaces in the Bay Area which would be happy to have them)." And Mariam's quote (by Grace) regarding Gilman's history of saying "no" to major label bands is dead on. Yes, "way to flush it," Gilman!

I believe I have two or three issues of *MRR* remaining on my subscription. Hopefully my feelings will change and I may renew my subscription. After all, Al, Felix, and Lefty still have columns, for now anyway...Imogen Binnie's column is also very good! And really, all of the columns are informative and interesting. But at this point, and I am very let down (again) by the dismissal of a great *MRR* columnist.

Earlier I commented about the direction this magazine has gone in recent issues. Please do not think I am against the attention given to women bands or any other type of gender and racial diversity. I totally agree that *MRR* should provide exposure to everyone and I also believe that a lot of people do not get the exposure they deserve.

Punk/HC is supposed to grow and progress. Perhaps people at *MRR* consider the opinions of Mykel Board and George Tabb to be antiquated and no longer relevant. If so, I disagree and strongly contend that the "sacking" of Mykel Board and George Tabb were in no way "progressive" deciscions.

In closing, I realize I have left myself open to attacks regarding many of my opinions in this letter. Go ahead and fire away...I really do not care. For years I have defended *MRR* against opinions of many people from the Midwest (mostly crusty friends), but I think I am beginning to see their point. Thank you to Mykel Board and George Tabb for their dedication to *MRR*. If anyone wants to send me zines (Any old *Suburban Voices* laying around, Al?) or any other correspondence, please do so.

Bryan Iverson #21352
RCMU
2725 Creek Dr. Ste 1
Rapid City, SD 57703

Hi Bryan,

Thanks for writing in. While we obviously disagree on a lot, your letter is certainly more considered than the only other dissenting response we got to George's firing, a caller who let us know that he would only be keeping his subscription current because "it's cheaper than toilet paper."

I am interested in examining and dissecting oppressive language, yes, but the phrase "politically correct" doesn't figure into my vocabulary. I would ask you (a man) why I (a woman) should care if you *aren't bothered by someone's use of gendered language, though.*

I got a shot in for his use of "pussy," sure, but George Tabb was fired because he is irrelevant to the state of contemporary DIY punk. He's been trotting out variations on the same stories for years. This magazine has always been about what is happening in the here and now and no one has carte blanche to remain a columnist forever. The closest George got to talking about the present during my time here were plugs for the new Call of Duty game and the most recent Dwarves record. (Blech! But who are we to censor what some might knowingly call "poor taste"?) His relevance ran its course many years ago and the recent repeat violations of our policies just made cutting the cord that much easier.

His participation in this magazine's history is not insignificant and this decision does not change that. That said, I am thrilled to give his column-inches over to people with something else to say—Erika Elizabeth and Sadie Switchblade's new regular columns, plus more exciting voices to come. There are 120-something pages of non-Tabb related content in this magazine every month and I hope you can find value in them.

I'd be happy to send you a copy of George's most recent book. It will give you access to more George Tabb than we'd be able to provide in your 1.5 years left behind bars. Don't be surprised though if you somehow feel like you've read it all before...

—Grace

MFPF!

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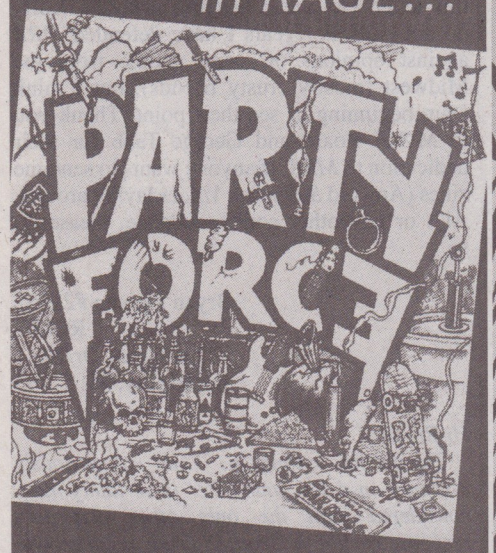

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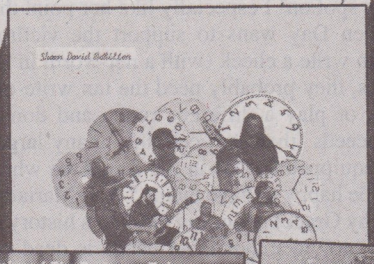

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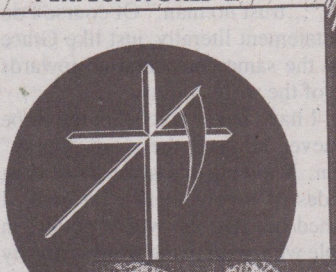

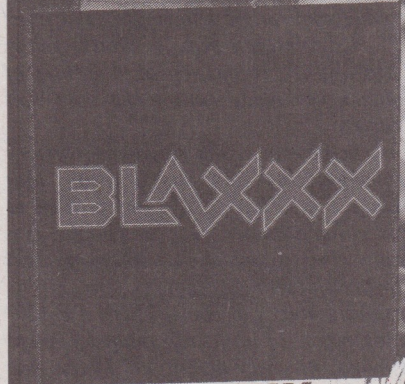

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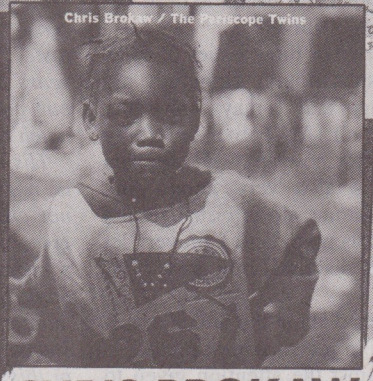
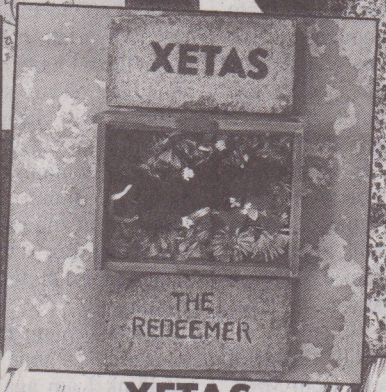


CHRIS BROKAW
THE PERISCOPE TWINS 2XLP



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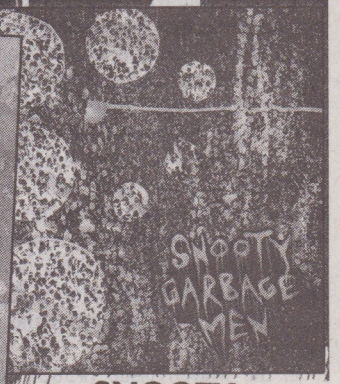

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COLUMNS

I got hit by a car while I was riding my bike to work almost two months ago, and somewhere between getting slammed into the passenger door of an SUV and falling into the road in front of a vacuum cleaner museum (no, really), the Achilles tendon in my left leg got completely trashed and I was carted off to the hospital in an ambulance, bruised and torn up and unable to walk. I've finally started trying to get back into something resembling my normal routines (specifically the record store browsing/going to shows circuit that's basically my main form of social interaction) now that I've mostly recovered, after several weeks of essentially being confined to my second-floor apartment with nothing much to do beyond reading a stack of books that I'd been neglecting and listening to a lot of my old records, which isn't exactly a terrible way to spend time, although being in a fog of painkillers and wanting to sleep for about eighteen hours a day sort of takes the fun out of it.

I had already been looking forward to seeing Reykjavík, Iceland's BÖRN while they were touring the States recently, and their stop in Portland wound up being the first show that I made it out to post-bike collision. Maybe it's just because I'm living in the notoriously gloom-punk oversaturated Pacific Northwest, but "goth" and "post-punk," especially when used in conjunction with one another, seem to be two of the most overused and indiscriminately applied descriptors at the moment for pretty much any punk band with vaguely dissonant and/or misanthropic leanings. BÖRN can rightfully claim both of those loaded terms, though. Their brand new 7" on Total Negativity lays waste to the dozens of current by-the-numbers neo-post-punk bands armed with chorus pedals and bowing at the altar of *Unknown Pleasures*. Vocalist Alexandra has the type of fierce, dramatic voice that invites some natural comparisons to Siouxsie Sioux, delivering lyrics in Icelandic that tear apart some of society's fucked up conventions, from body image ideals to police violence (at least according to interviews with the band, since I don't speak Icelandic) with wild-eyed rage. Even without being able to understand their lyrical content, I'd still point to the rich history of female-fronted anarcho-punk as another major BÖRN touchstone (think RUBELLA BALLET / DOG FACED HERMANS), with heavy, repetitive post-punk bass lines serving as the beating heart at their center. Don't be surprised to see this one on a lot of year-end best singles lists in a few months (or at least on mine) (borndeyja.bandcamp.com)

I've been really excited about Boston band FLEABITE's blown-out and broken-hearted pop songs for leather-jacketed tough girls since they first appeared with last year's *Over It* cassette, which channeled scrappy, vintage K Records-inspired love-rock through the sort of noisy, punk snarl that never quite made it to a TIGER TRAP record. That obvious '90s fixation is still present on their new 7" *TTYL*, right down to the lyrics of the sweet and sour fuzz-punk anthem (and strong candidate for a future break-up mixtape staple) "Magic 106.7," where cheesy songs by the likes of Matchbox 20 and Third Eye Blind on the radio serve as triggers for re-living the emotional wounds of lost love, punctuated by a totally out-there J Mascis/DINOSAUR JR worthy guitar solo. They've got all of the period-perfect details of Clinton-era DIY slacker-pop nailed here—heavily reverbed female vocals alternating between being disaffected and sugar-coated, razor-sharp melodic hooks smothered in blankets of distortion, and giddily ragged noise crashing into infectious sing-along choruses. It's an ideal summertime soundtrack for your upcoming over-caffeinated late nights spent getting up to no good. (fleabitema.bandcamp.com)

Several years ago, I was working at a record store in Northampton, Massachusetts that was in a process of sharp decline toward eventual disappearance, which meant that I was routinely spending entire shifts by myself in the windowless, devoid-of-customers basement that housed all of the used LPs, giving me plenty of time to dig through the seemingly endless crates of dollar records and throw anything that looked remotely interesting on the shop turntable, with the best of it coming home with me each night. For some reason, those bargain bins has a significant number of LPs from DB Records out of Atlanta (who, among other things, put out the first B-52's single), and this was how I first heard the SIDE EFFECTS, an Athens, Georgia band who put out one 12" EP on the label in 1981 and splintered not too long afterwards.

Even amongst the people I know who are relatively well-versed in the most arcane corners of early '80s American post-punk, the SIDE EFFECTS seem to have completely fallen through the cracks. The band's debut show was actually at a party in Athens where an as-yet-unnamed band later known as R.E.M. were also playing for the first time, which seems to be as appropriate a metaphor as any for how the SIDE EFFECTS have been relegated to being a minor footnote in the history of Athens' celebrated musical underground. What initially struck me about this EP is how it seems to perfectly synthesize what was happening in the concurrent post-punk scenes happening at the time on both sides of the Atlantic. Just on the A-side, you get "Raining," echoing the stark, moody aesthetic of Factory Records' early catalog, leading into "French Forest," which walks a seriously MISSION OF BURMA-ish tightrope between tension and melody. Best of all might be the insistent, minimalist bass hook and warped surf guitar in "Through With You," taking plenty of cues from the angular yet still eminently danceable sounds of the late '70s UK underground (a little GANG OF FOUR, a little *Chairs Missing*-era WIRE), spiked with the distinctly American art school weirdness shared by their Athens friends and neighbors in PYLON and the METHOD ACTORS. I've never really been one of those people who picks up additional copies of records that I already own and love just to pass them along to someone else, but grabbing a five dollar copy of this one last fall to give to my fellow post-punk enthusiast friend Matt and seeing the look on his face after he heard it was one of the most gratifying experiences I've had in awhile.

On the topic of neglected '80s post-punk gems, have you ever wondered what the MO-DETTES might have sounded like with the successful addition of a few boys to their ranks? I can't really say that I ever did, but Liverpool's the MODERATES have ensured that it won't ever have to be an enduring question for anyone else. If you know anything at all about John Peel, you'll also understand completely when I say that the MODERATES

might be the textbook example of a "John Peel band"—clearly a product of the late '70s/early '80s UK post-punk renaissance, but falling on the spiky-yet-sophisticated side of that axis, closer in spirit to GIRLS AT OUR BEST! or the MONOCHROME SET than some of their more agitated and caustic contemporaries. Appropriately enough, they actually did record a Peel Session in 1981, following the release of this column's chosen topic of discussion, their four-song *Fetishes* 12" EP from 1980. "Yes to the Neutron Bomb," with cool-as-ice monotone vocals from singer Heidi Klure and backing shouts from keyboardist John Brady over a ridiculously danceable bass pulse and cutting slashes of guitar, deserves to be an early '80s femme-punk classic on the level of the MODETTES' "White Mice" or DELTA 5's "Mind Your Own Business," and the MODERATES' apparent spiritual connection with those bands is equally evident on "High Heel Shoes," featuring a boy/girl call-and-response with a sharply feminist focus ("You don't want my conversation / I am just an illustration / in a kinky magazine"). I'm all about it

Last but not least this time around, one of my all-time favorite documents of the slightly shambling late '70s/early '80s UK DIY scene is a 1980 single from VOICE OF THE PUPPETS (reissued in 2010 by the incredible Sing Sing label but regretfully now out-of-print once again) that fans the flames of economical punk primitivism with a wobbly bedroom pop charm that out-C86s most C86 bands, and six years ahead of the curve, at that. Like so many other post-punk hyper-obscurities resurrected from the dusty archives, VOICE OF THE PUPPETS were a one-release-and-done wonder, and the cartoon-drawn history of the band reproduced on their single's fold-out sleeve shows the band members stumbling upon the idea for the record in 1979 after they realize that they can only play two songs in time and deciding that the key to success is discarding politics in favor of singing love songs, which really is the perfect single-frame summary of the many charms in their two-song catalog. A-side banger "I Don't Wanna Know" sounds like a mutant version of the BUZZCOCKS' "Love You More," complete with an extremely Pete Shelley-esque trebly, unpolished guitar solo buried within its killer (and seemingly effortless) power-pop hooks, but the B-side, "You're All I Ever Wanted (And A Car)," is honestly on my short list of the greatest love songs ever written, serving as a punk-derived counterpart (at least in my mind) to the PASTELS' classic "Nothing to Be Done." You know all of those early Creation Records bands who made an art out of balancing jangly pop naivety with bursts of sneering punk aggression? This one tops anything they ever collectively did, almost without exception.

Send me letters and music! Let's talk! Analog: Erika Elizabeth / 2545 E. Burnside Street #203 / Portland, OR 97214 / USA; digital: ripitupstartagain@gmail.com; radio shows for your listening enjoyment: expresswaytoyrskull.com

"We say down with the law enforcement
They want to shut us out and destroy our movement"
— Oxblood, "Lawman"

"What did you say? Re!Spect! Walk!
Are you talking to me?! Are you talking to me?!
Noooo way, punk!..."
sikk guitar solo
— Pantera, "Walk"

"Skinhead gangs all over the world!
Fight no more amongst your selves!
Join together and fight for your lives!
Cuz we all know the strongest survive!"
— Stars and Stripes, "Shaved for Battle"

Lasers in the Jungle

Hello hoagie heads! This column is being slammed out in the last momentos of May. This'll be out for the 4th of July? Or after? At any rate, Memorial Day just passed, and I'm looking forward to Independence Day. It's the preferred holiday of the Gang. We've been jamming FORCED REALITY and RED, WHITE & BLUE non-stop cuz we got the pride. But we're also well rounded and decent folk so we've been mixing in that STEEL CHAINS demo cuz it's sikk. In between all that noise we've accrued some solid slabs this month that you'll prolly dig even if you're not a clean cut American yute. Something I've been noticing and appreciating recently is Oi!'s return to the big tent. In the late '90's Oi! was boxing itself into one sound (produced by Lars Frederiksen) and it seems like it's been working to unbox itself the last few years. The current wave of bands is making a lot of room for a lot of folks. And that's a good thing. The Gang and I are no conformists. This month we got a wide range of music (not able to cover it all here), from hools-rock to yob-pop, to booted glam and even some new wave skinhead reggae. Ne-Ne Na-Na Na-Na Nu-Nu!

Like a Tilbrook screaming outta my speakers came a new band from Melbourne by the name of NO CLASS. If LOBBY LOYDE, LEMMY and LITTLE BOB STORY snorted a bunch of crank and tried to ape MENACE maybe they'd sound like NO CLASS. There's a full tilt Chiswick pup-rock sound to this six-song demo. And I'm not just using that as a code word for SKREWDRIVER. With song titles like, "Courthouse Blues," "Night in the Cells", and "Blue Collared Rock'n'Roll," NO CLASS would fit right in on the classic 10", *Never Mind Other Labels...Here's Chiswick*. These are dudes who work hard and they play hard too. You know that feeling when you leave work and you raise your fist to the air like Judd Nelson at the end of the *Breakfast Club*? The Germans have a word for it: Feierabend. NO CLASS kick off their demo with a song by the same name. Real shit right here: "Days turn to weeks / Weeks turn to months / You spend years working for these cunts / You aint seen much / Where have you been?/ Time to lock it up, chuck it in / Feierabend! / Feierabend!" New wave of the pub-rock daze right here! Give them some scratch for a new oil filter here: noclassoz.bandcamp.com.

Way back in 2013, Bootboy's Cove Records commenced their top-notch output with the SUBURBS' debut EP, *Same Old Shit*. This year the saloon baboons over at Contra (contra-net.com) have proffered us the band's new LP, *The Good Times are Gone*. You get seven songs a side on this fine slab of sing-along Oi! If Oi! was a high school these bozos would be buddies with HARD SKIN and BLADDER BLADDER BLADDER and would attend classes taught by the EJECTED, the OPPRESSED and maybe the BUSINESS. But for realsies, this is hale and hearty Brit-influenced Oi! The songs deal with classic Oi! themes such as oppositional defiant disorder, unchecked alcoholism, anti-poseurism, skinhead identity, working class fetishism, and is approved by the North American Man/Oi! Love Association. The band spits it right out on the last cut of the album, "It's the same old shit, but I never get bored with it!" Amen.

The TRADITIONALS dropped the impressive *Steel Town Anthems* (Impact Records) on our heads in 2011, but other than a few splits where they offered up previously released material they've been mostly quiet. But fear not cuz Pittsburgh hometown heroes, the TRADITIONALS are alive and well in 2015. Their new album, *Tried & True* (Randale) is their return to the front lines of American oi! The band has worn Pittsburgh's working class background on their sleeves since they started back in '97 and *Tried & True* keeps the message going. From "Daily Struggle": "Daily struggle gets a hold of you / It's beating you black and blue / I am tired of feeling screwed / But what can I do?" Quitting ain't an option for these roughnecks! When I got the digipack I scanned the back and saw the last track was titled "Allentown." I was hoping for a BILLY JOEL cover (he probably drinks as much as any skinhead band combined) but what I got instead was a serious rock'n'roller about the shit that went down at the 2008 East Coast Oi! Fest. There is also a killer piano-Oi! (pianoi!) tune called "Dog House" and more than a few tracks about drinking and being a skinhead. Ya know...Oi! As a skinhead who doesn't drink I enjoy this album from front to back. The Gang crushed about two cases of La Croix while putting this album on repeat ("Hey you mutherfuckers, we only drink pamplemousse La Croix"). The CD is out now, the LP is forthcoming. Hopefully we don't have to wait another four years for fresh material from Dave Harris and company.

It's summer and we can't just listen to angry patriotic Oi! (or write about it in these pages I guess)—sometimes the Gang has to chill out and calm down. We don't always listen to ska, but when we do its ska played by skinheads. The VALKYRIANS are a group of Finnish lad who came to my attention a few years ago when they released their album, *Punkrocksteady*, where they do rocksteady covers of tunes by 999, the ONLY ONES, COCK SPARRER, BUZZCOCKS, among others. Get it? On their newest record, *Rock My Soul* (Grover Records), their style is mellow and legit. This is not ska-punk but serious laid back ska. The singer, Angster, has a delivery akin to Bucket from the TOASTERS and there is a general NY Moon Ska vibe to the whole record. On some of the songs I get a sense of some JAM mod swagger too. A very nice record indeed. Listen to some tracks at thevalkyrians.bandcamp.com. "Call Me After Midnight" is the Sunday afternoon hit around here.

I'm gonna wrap this up. Hope your Independence Day was a banger. From their new album on United Riot, *This is America*, (a collection of previous output and a few new tracks), the WOLVERINES, from the title track have this to say, "Lady Liberty stands tall you can't disgrace her name / You must accept responsibility and take the blame / This country that I love lets bums like you walk free / But I will stand up for this land so don't you tread on me / This is the land I love / A land to be proud of / This is America!" Oi! Thanks for reading! Go hug a buddy.

ENDNOTES:

1) Send your opinions on this BS to AMERICANBOOTGANG@Gmail.com

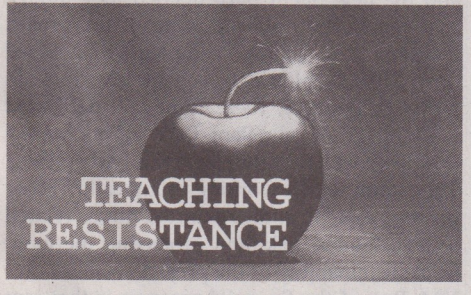
2) Tell me about demos or records I don't know about. Even if I do know about them it helps me whittle this shit down.

3) I'll be out on the road next month driving thru the desert in a Ford Ranger, listening to PAUL SIMON, looking at mountains and getting perspective an' shit. Gonna try to not miss a column, but who knows?

4) RIP George Tabb's column.

5) Long Live Imogen Binnie's column. It's the only other not-strictly music related column I read.

6) Go Pirates.



Though the institutions of education are historically problematic and often oppressive, students who have experienced them as outsiders and true critical thinkers understand the importance of learning from teachers who have developed radical notions of what education is and how it works. The Teaching Resistance *column is designed to provide a platform for radical, subversive teachers/educators to share their ideas and draw attention to important issues around education.*

As radical teachers, we are always learning from our students, and understand that a student can very much be a teacher in a broader sense as well. One of the core tenets of truly student-centered teaching practice is to listen, to not be afraid to allow students to turn the lens of reflection on us (or our bosses/administrators), to break down the hierarchical structures and authoritarian tendencies of our profession so that we can all truly learn to be better human beings together.

This month's column is written by Kadijah Means, who attended Berkeley High School (California) and is a recent graduate of the class of 2015. She was a student leader, heading up the Black Student Union and Amnesty International groups on campus, and has been regularly interviewed in local media, particularly with regard to her involvement in the Black Lives Matter movement.

Berkeley High has an international reputation as an enlightened, modern high school that has sometimes employed radical measures to address systemic educational inequities that are rooted in racism, class discrimination, gender/sexuality biases, and other problems that plague schools across the U.S. (and worldwide). Even in this "enlightened" institution, however, these problems persist and often end up magnified. In her column, Kadijah discusses specific examples from Berkeley High to illustrate the repeated failures of the educational system in addressing racism, both within the school context and in the wider world. She also gives some concrete suggestions for ways that teachers, administrators, and school districts can work long-term to be more responsive and help combat the pervasive reality of race-based inequities. Kadijah can be contacted directly at kadijah.means@gmail.com.

The topic of racism is again at the forefront of the average American's mind. In response to non-indictments and injustice catching the eye of mainstream media, movements like the Black Lives Matter have spread across the U.S.. The U.S education system, specifically in "progressive" places like Berkeley, CA, has found itself scrambling to write lessons and alter curriculum to meet the needs of the systematically oppressed. The system was completely unprepared to address the idea of institutional racism. The fact that they were unprepared is sad, but not surprising. To be frank this is a recurring reality—microaggressions and even explicit forms of bias will occur on a daily basis. Faculty are ill-prepared to manage any classroom conflict, not to mention racially motivated ones. There are two issues colliding here: 1) Poor communication from administration to Berkeley High students and faculty and 2) a toxic racist environment that prevents students of color from flourishing in the way their white counterparts can.

If communication is key, we haven't been able to unlock anything lately—this cliché couldn't be more accurate in regards to Berkeley High School (BHS). There are no processes in place to aid dialogue between administration, teachers and students. Furthermore, when concerning events take place, there is no effort to inform the faculty or students. Here are two solid examples of dis bullshit:

On October 1st, 2014, a BHS security officer discovered a noose hanging from a tree on campus. The school administration waited more than five days to announce the incident, even after pressure from the Dean of Students and the Black Student Union (BSU). When they released a statement via email, it was ineffective, as the majority of the student body remained ignorant of the incident. As president of the BSU and Amnesty International Clubs, I reached out to the Gay / Straight Alliance to put pressure on the administration to act decisively. We decided to force a response by releasing a statement to local news notifying them of the occurrence. In addition to organizing for news coverage, employing the tactics of guerrilla warfare, I read a statement over the school's public announcement system to inform all the students of what happened on our campus, not in 1964, but today, in 2014.

There was no plan to tell the students about the noose. A student group had to bring this information to the student body. The administration planned to put paper hearts in the tree. The hearts were placed in the tree prior to the announcement. Students wondered why there were paper hearts hanging in a seemingly arbitrary tree on campus because they were never informed about the noose. You can't *actually* resolve problems before people realize there's a problem. It doesn't actually work. I don't want to make too many assumptions, but I imagine the admin felt like "this couldn't have happened at our school," a classic "not in Berkeley" scenario. Instead of allowing us to feel shitty about the despicable event that occurred on our campus the admin rushed into a band-aid or short-term solution. Sometimes it is important for us to sit in the uncomfortableness.

The noose was a reality check for many. We are not post-racial. Putting hearts in the tree without telling the student body what happened was a rush to solve something that is not solvable in the short-term. This incident illustrates the poor communication and racial tension stirring on campus. I felt the administration didn't want to face the possibility that this was a malicious act happened in Berkeley, and therefore attempted to cover it up. In the case of the noose, those affected by the triggering imagery were neglected. This is a prime example of how the burden to educate students falls on the affected community. A racially charged incident took place and people of color were expected to respond. Students of color carry this burden, and it definitely impacts them in the classroom. In instances like this the marginalized continue to be disenfranchised even when "it's not on

purpose."

The administration downplayed what happened to make sure the minority of the school, the white students, were more comfortable than the 60 percent, student of color majority. Rather than confront the fact that racism and prejudice still exist, the administration acted as if ignoring the noose made the problem disappear. As an active advocate for equality and equity, it is an understatement to say that I was concerned that the situation was not being taken seriously. I felt the history of discrimination was being minimized. We remember the Holocaust, but we constantly try to move past the racist and violent history against black people in this country. The discriminatory treatment of black people is easily ignored today because it is less tangible than at the height of lynchings in 1895 or the violence surrounding the 1960s civil rights movement, but it is no less insidious. This silence of our community around issues of race plays out in a very dangerous way for students of color. Many experience discrimination or microaggressions and have nowhere to turn. Learning in this environment isn't impossible, but it is harder and that's what matters. It is integral that we support students so they feel able to express when inequities occur.

In a place like Berkeley High where the school is dramatically divided by race, class, and worldview, it is hard to teach about race and racism (they are different conversations). I have found that difficult topics are often avoided. Conversations about racism, how it affects people of color and our community are essential to preparing genuinely egalitarian humans. If that is not the goal, then at the bare minimum we should be creating critical thinkers.

I love teachers. I don't want to complicate their job. They are already playing so many roles in the classroom. I understand that the omission of certain topics is due to lack of training and a fear of discomfort. No one wants to be the racist teacher who said something unintentionally offensive, so they'd rather just skip the conversation completely. I get that. Teachers simply haven't been taught about systemic oppression, or how to facilitate discussions about it. The intent of omission is to avoid hurting anyone's feelings, but the impact of omission onto students of color is damaging. The one institution that is charged with preparing young minds for higher order thinking employs a pedagogy that appeals to white students without regard for the students of color in the classroom. We have to reframe our approach.

Solutions

I am not an expert in education. I am a student who is keenly aware of the impact racism has on students. If I was asked to reform the current school system in the U.S here are a few things I would suggest.

1) Stop buying textbooks from Texas. [*Editor's note: since Texas is such a large textbook market, publishers in the United States generally produce textbooks that conform to the educational and curricular standards set by the Texas State Boards of Education. Not surprisingly, Texas' education boards are packed with Republicans: religious conservatives, racist neo-Confederates, and industrial lobbyists, so you can imagine what kind of "standards" are set by these people, particularly in science and social studies*]

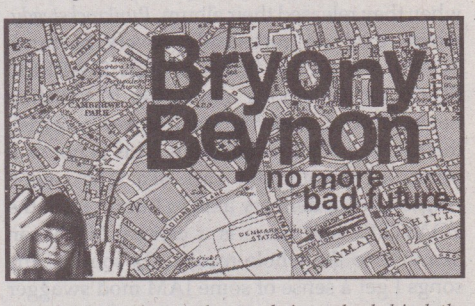
2) Cultural Competency Training. There are skilled educators who can explain the ideas of privilege, systematic racism, micro vs. macro aggressions, and explicit vs. implicit bias. Every school needs this attention. If a place like Berkeley needs this training then every city in the U.S needs this. I would suggest integrating inclusive curriculum that highlights the contributions of all people to the world, as opposed to Eurocentric curriculum only. That means history, math, and science would need to acknowledge contributions from all cultures. This will take time. We have to be dedicated to change if we want it.

3) Diversifying Thought. When discussing the Black Lives Matter movement in class someone said, "They couldn't support such a violent movement." In my experience at Berkeley High I've had lots of students tell me that "nonviolence" is the only way to change things (their idea of violence is looting and property damage, which I do not believe is violence). If I respond, it is usually something like this: "I am not asking nicely for those oppressing me to stop. In fact, I am not asking at all. I am demanding the freedom and equity my people deserve. So maybe that means some windows will be broken, and some noise will be made after 10pm—so what?" Unfortunately, I can count the number of teachers who share these radical thoughts on my hand. We can't expect students to question the status quo if the people teaching them aren't willing to question it themselves. We need minds stretching across the entire political spectrum. Diversity of thought is what enriches the learning experience. The entire reason we advocate for ethnic diversity is to expose students to different walks of life. If everyone in the classroom looks different, but has parallel mindsets, that is not enriching. We need to expose students to more radical ideas.

4) Clear Communication. There should be clear processes to inform students and teachers of current events on campus, especially harmful events. When it comes to inequity silence is violence.

Change is not always abrupt. These are societal flaws. Racism affects the entire country. The education system has to actively walk away from racism in order to make a difference. The education system is forced to clean up a mess that it did not create. It will take time, but we have to make an effort.

This column is designed to provide a platform for radical, subversive teachers/educators to share their ideas and draw attention to important issues around education; particularly compulsory and community-based education. If you are a teacher (anywhere in the world) for students of primary or secondary school ages (K-12), community colleges, or alternative learning arrangements such as collectivist free schools, and you want to submit an idea for a column, please write to John No at teachingresistance@gmail.com.



Another month, another peek into the behind the scenes world of DIY spaces around the world. This month it's the turn of the Silent Barn, a long-running New York City-based project with a sprawling, fascinating infrastructure that has carved out a unique niche in what they call the 'giant gray area between "formal arts residency" and "punk house"'. I caught up with two resident organizers, Liz and Nina (NM) to find out more.

When did Silent Barn open? Am I right in thinking this is its second iteration?

Liz: The Silent Barn was originally born in 2006 in Queens, as a smaller house-show space. There were shows in the basement and the kitchen, and a few people lived there. That venue was vandalized and eventually shut down in 2011, at which point a few of the residents and friends decided to collectivize and work towards opening a more sustainable above-ground all-ages art space. The first show at the new Silent Barn was December 30, 2012.

What was the process like for actually securing space and what are the financial pressures?

Liz: I moved to the Barn in January 2014. I wasn't actually involved in the old space, or the process of securing the new space. From what I've gathered, securing the new space involved a lot of meetings and emails and organizing and hard work, and many spaces were considered. The re-organization process between when the first Silent Barn closed and the new Silent Barn opened took almost two years. The initial funding of the project involved a Kickstarter campaign that raised over $40,000, plus a bunch of investors. In terms of finances, there is now a dedicated working group at Silent Barn called Money Buddies that handles finances and accounting. They work with a working group called Risky Bizness, which handles assorted things related to legal issues, risk, and protecting the long-term sustainability of the project.

NM: Part of the financial pressure is that rent in New York is incredibly expensive. Silent Barn is able to alleviate some of that pressure by renting out studio spaces and apartments above the venue and by having most of the

admin work done by volunteers, but there is still a lot of overhead to cover. The main ways for art spaces to make money are from grants, donors, sponsors or running a bar. We've had some amazing people donate small amounts to the space which has helped a lot, but no major angel donors. Our mission statement is explicitly anti-sponsorship. We've gotten grants for small projects within the Barn but not for the space as a whole thus far. A lot of the money for the show space comes from the bar because that's the default model but it's definitely not ideal, especially at an all-ages show space that prioritizes experimental shows over giant bangers. It's a bummer how closely affiliated running an art space is with selling alcohol.

The live-in deal seems unusual for a DIY space. Can you talk a bit about the residency scheme?

Liz: Silent Barn occupies a three-story building. The first floor is the public venue, with a large show space, a bar and cafe, a gallery, a big backyard, a record shop, barbershop, and garage full of studios. The second and third floor are the residencies—they are very much separate and even have their own separate entrance. There are four apartments, each with its own kitchenette, bathroom and two bedrooms. Residents are encouraged to treat their space as their studio. Tali and I over the past year have used our kitchen/living room as a practice space, which is how we were able to start a band here together. We recorded some of our record here. We host all sorts of performances in our apartment, have a rotating zine wall and a couple of permanent installations up. There have been Spanish classes and readings and meetings. Residents make up the residency working group, so the residency program is sort of in constant flux, and basically driven by whoever lives in the Barn at any given moments. At times it seems there have been folks who want to see it play out like more of a formal artist residency program. But it's also sort of challenging to offer that kind of formal environment, since in order to live here you need to be down with shows happening all the time, not having a lot of private space, and general sensory overload.

NM: Silent Barn's residency program is pretty wacky because it occupies this giant gray area between "formal arts residency" and "punk house." Residents have included everyone from professional artists with formal practices and art world cred to 19-year-old pop stars to people who might not consider themselves "artists" in any legible capacity but just fit into the energy exchange of the space. Initially the residencies were supposed to all switch out every year so that many different people could feel ownership of the space and have the pretty life-changing experience of living at the center of something like this, but we realized that yearly changeovers would be too chaotic and too much like a college dorm so now it's on a rolling basis—people can stay for one month or three or six or a year or sometimes longer. It's not the most comfortable living environment but when you think of it as temporary you can really put a lot of energy into the goals you have for your residency. It's weird when people cycle out because most live-in DIY spaces are run entirely by their residents and though that's not the case here, the residents really do shape the space's vibe. But it's inspiring to see new people cycle in and get inspired by Barn life.

Who's involved on a day-to-day basis and how do you split tasks and make decisions?

Liz: It's hard to say, since it's always changing. Most decisions at the Silent Barn are made by the collective, which is referred to here as "The Kitchen." I think there's somewhere around 50-70 collective members right now. Collective members are called "chefs." Each chef is a person who works on a specific project here, or rents space here. Each chef is proposed to the collective and voted on via email. A lot of the communication is done via email lists. Within the Kitchen, there are about sixteen working groups—that number is also always changing. I actually had to look up that number in our internal Silent Barn Wiki. Some examples are Grants, Media, Public Art, and Deep Space, the latter of which works on construction and maintenance of the building. I'm involved in the Shows working group, which manages public events, and the Safer Spaces working group. And since we live here we're also involved in residency stuff.

The working groups have a fair amount of autonomy to make decisions for themselves, but when decisions are going to affect the entire collective, there is a formal proposal and voting process that happens over email. There's also a weekly Kitchen Meeting that all collective members are welcome to attend, though most people tend to prioritize working group meetings.

It's important to know that there are also five dudes who are on the lease who also comprise an LLC called Paesthetics, which is considered a working group and although the "Silent Barn Kitchen" is in theory a collective, there are hierarchies that exist to make the Silent Barn happen. It can be confusing. The Barn also made the collective decision last year to hire a full-time employee a/k/a "The Barn Coordinator" who handles a lot of logistics, licenses, bar and staff management, and other stuff.

What are the best and worst/most challenging things about working collectively?

Liz: The Silent Barn is unlike any other collective organizing experience I've ever had, because it's such a huge project and there are so many people and perspectives involved. We can only really speak to our specific experiences within the Silent Barn, which are limited to the specific working groups and projects we've been involved with. The size of the collective is definitely a challenge in and of itself. Communication can be hard. The biggest challenges, I think, are on-boarding new volunteers, and the sort of thanklessness that can come with the collective process. You get used to the idea that sometimes your hard work will be overlooked. But it's kind of humbling in a way—you learn to let go of ego and do stuff for the sake of doing it and effecting change or opening up space, rather than for the sake of recognition or a pat on the back.

NM: Echo everything that Liz said! A non-hierarchical project like this is a pretty major lesson in letting go of control, learning how to work with and trust other people, how different people communicate and process information in different ways...Basically every other space has a definite leader and a clear chain of command and people who are used to working that way get really frustrated by Barn processes—at worst it can be like a giant game of broken telephone, and since it's all volunteer-run it can take months to execute a simple task because people get distracted by jobs or life stuff. It also makes it hard to keep people—someone can be in the middle of a really important project, then get a demanding outside job and have to quit. But then at its best it's really inspiring to see so many people dedicate their energies to keeping the space alive for really no reason other than believing in it. There are collective members doing volunteer admin or construction who are professional lawyers and architects. The structure itself is sort of an implicit challenge to a lot of the values we're taught in a capitalist consumerist society.

I feel like an organization with this many moving parts has taught me a lot about how societies organize and how power gets distributed consciously and unconsciously. In many ways it's this weird microcosm of so many larger governments/bureaucracies..

What other spaces are you been inspired by?

NM: The Vera Project, Museum of Human Achievement, Death by Audio, Dreamhaus.

Liz: I was really inspired by the Boston house show community when I lived there. Now I am most inspired by folks who are taking the energy of punk and DIY and trying to create more sustainable and accessible spaces, like Pure Joy in Chicago and the DIY Space for London project y'all are working on!

Best show or event so far?

Liz: The first Alice show. Friends First Fest. Any time ELM performs. The Media 50th issue party. Any Downtown Boys show actually, because at their shows Victoria tends to talk about gentrification and Bushwick and the ways we are all implicit in it, which is important to have articulated on stage during shows.

NM: Queer Punk Pride. Anything BK Transcore books. Grrrlfest, which was all bands by girls currently in high school. Phresh Cuts parties, which used to be these queer dance parties / pop-up queer barbershops. Cypher League hip

hop showcases. The biannual Paper Jam Zine Fair. Really intense transcendent noise shows that less than a dozen people show up to. Any time a band plays their first show.

What part of town is the space in, and role if any do you think DIY spaces can play in gentrification? How if at all have you tried to counter this?

Liz: The Silent Barn has a specific Outreach working group which specifically exists to make sure the space is engaged with our neighborhood. There is one member of that working group who goes to a lot of community board meetings. That working group also organizes our Public Meeting series of panel discussions. There was recently one on police brutality.

NM: The space is in Bushwick which is a rapidly gentrifying neighborhood, so that's a really complicated thing to negotiate. This part of Bushwick had DIY spaces long before Silent Barn moved in—the Market Hotel had been here since 2008, Body Actualized, Party Expo, a ton of other spots...but since we're an above ground space, realtors can use us to "brand" the neighborhood and lure in new populations. The very first few months we were here we would look on Craigslist and see realtors advertising $1400 studios "right next to Salad Wheel and Silent Barn!" It was really dark.

Then again, being an above ground space means we can do real public activism without being afraid to blow up the spot. We can go on record as standing in solidarity with existing community movements without worrying that we're going to be evicted the next day.

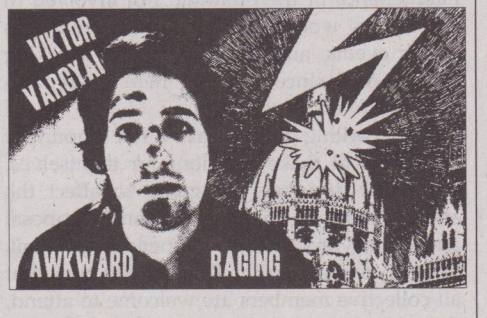
The relationship between DIY spaces and the neighborhoods they move into is historically really tense, and Silent Barn is actively trying to fight that model. The archetype is that young affluent white artists move into working class low-income communities, usually communities of color, then alienate existing residents by drawing more "outsiders" who don't respect the neighborhood and by throwing shows that are too loud too late. We've been taking steps to form relationships with existing Bushwick residents—we open the space as a daytime cafe, hold weekend daytime events for kids and parents, have a music school, host youth hip hop & dance workshops, we've organized events with the local senior center. Outreach participates in conversations surrounding anti-gentrification, anti-rezoning, and anti-development and makes the space available to community activist groups to hold meetings. The very model of collective ownership is theoretically intended to make space for people from different backgrounds to get involved and direct the space in whatever way feels necessary. Ultimately, because of white supremacy, "culture" is only legible when it's being fostered by white kids with liberal arts educations working within accepted frameworks, but there are a lot of artists in Bushwick already, and although we recognize we're coming into this neighborhood as outsiders, we try to make this space open to them as much as if not more than anyone else. We're trying to stay accountable and pursue a collaborative model rather than a colonial one.

The thing is, all of the above relates to us trying to be better citizens of our geographic communities, but I don't know if it does a damn thing in terms of fighting the actual forces that drive gentrification. It's a pretty complicated calculated structural matrix that has more to do with huge realty firms, high-profile marketing campaigns, tax breaks and strategic rezoning deals than DIY spaces... though artists do end up playing a huge part. Landlords love leasing space to affluent white "creatives" to raise property values...they let them stay and do their thing, make things look cool and attractive...then a couple of years later they kick them out, sell the property, build a condo.

What kind of lifespan do you see it having?

Liz: The Silent Barn is currently on a ten-year lease…I'm sure it will exist for all ten of those years, at least, though I imagine it will probably have ebbs and flows of looking and feeling different ways.

More information at silentbarn.org.



Sup punk rock?!

May usually means that the European touring season conquers my life. I successfully resisted this year and executed my part of being a promoter as I lazily as I could, ending up booking only two shows rather than four or five. Bands I hosted were Permanent Ruin and Dawn Of Humans. I got to hang with Merm and her awesome Crü, but those who didn't get the chance to put them up and spend extra time in their company still got to enjoy Perm Ru's amazing set. I saw them two or three years ago in the Bay Area and, to be honest, haven't spun them on record that often, but live their no bullshit, ageless, just-go-for-it perfect hardcore music ripped another asshole to the Budapest punk scene's communal ear.

Rich is a total powerhouse drummer. If you want your band to be good then you have to have a good drummer. He is an excellent drummer, laying down a robust dynamic, ever pounding groove, a field for bouncing chaos what the guitars bring on to the picture. It's just hardcore, raw, unstoppable, not in the spotlight but will stand the test of time. They remind me of all those forgotten but amazing hardcore bands who were the diamonds in the ocean of shit during the '90s, when no one had any idea about what was trendy or not and their only goal was to play as hard as possible.

In a way, I understand all my friends who wanted to smoke weed with Rich but were disappointed and totally bummed about his abstinence. Budapest connects through parties and mutual daze.

I got to spend time alone in the van with Mariam while the rest of the band went on a hunt for late night munchies. We talked about playing shows, punk itself, punk shows. Influenced by an essay I read few days prior to their show on the relationship between Futurism and noise / industrial music I got the idea that punx are also obsessed with futurist ideas since they (or at least I do) hate when their culture gets canonized and they are obsessed with physical movement itself. The indicator of a good show is people moving, right? So, when no one is moving it means the band failed. We discussed that band members should just focus on what is happening on the stage, not in front of it. Because as Stephee from Hysterics said, if you give everything for a show and people tell you they didn't like it, then you have every right to think, "Then fuck you, buddy!"

I always thought it was an offensive joke when bands beg / command people to move forward, come closer, run around in circles, jump on each other for the sake of the show. People are there to have fun, fucking punx bought tickets even though they are going against consumer culture and I—and hopefully them too—haven't become a punk to do what others tell me to. I stand wherever the fuck I want. For me that's the first row, because I hate people near me and everyone feels uncomfortable, when they stand close to a band who are frightened by the audience's presence and opinion. I also got tired of attacking the crowd. I used to do that to freak people out but real performances even from a distance could hit you. They should. It should be disgusting even without someone throwing his shit around, powerful without pushups on stage, thoughtful without reading aloud in public. The simple pretense of a stage act. Permanent Ruin definitely nailed it while no one really moved, myself included; I was shocked by how great they are. I love to dance but I appreciate my right to have fun on my own terms, so don't tell me where to sit and what to sing. What I loved in Permanent Ruin is that they didn't need my motions to know they were doing a great job.

Later, I almost puked on the band while they were sleeping, so I guess I have to stop drinking that much. Hello craft beer snobbism, good bye chugging dozens of shitty warm beers.

The *MRR* benefit show almost lost money at Budapest but luckily it broke even, and no one lost / made any money which is cool I guess since here nobody really reads this magazine, still there was one day when punk

shows happened all around the for a good cause which is I guess celebrating the diversity of international punk and maintaining its real channels. *MRR* is something that influences our lives even if we don't read it because everybody says they don't read it and somehow bands from their cover still appeared on other lame media few months after they were hyped in the zine. *MRR* is punk and punk is an idea, everyone who is punk and has an idea about punk can adapt the punk attitude to other parts of their lives. This influences the outer world, just like philosophers—who we haven't read or couldn't understand—influenced the whole world and how we see it now. This is not some esoteric, new age bullshit but most of us are in connection with each other so an important channel like *MRR* is for sure forming the face of punk whether you like it or not. Even you dear reader, mostly you.

Dawn of Humans were great. Their singer Emil is my fellow countryman, he speaks perfect Hungarian and was psyched about being here and hanging with Magyar punx. He is so sweet, I hope he comes back sometime soon and we can do some awkward raging together. His mother flew here too for a high school reuinion and she came to the show along with their whole local family, cousins, uncles, etc. At the end of their set Emil said in Hungarian into the microphone how much he loves her mom. That's my vibe too since everything that's good in me is thanks to my mom. That touched many people here, punx with sweet spots in their hearts.

Some friends of mine were totally amazed by them. I was amazed as well because I wasn't sold on the videos of their live sets. I don't care too much about naked people or public stunts but in advance I heard their LP which is such an amazing record and meeting them one day prior to the show I understood this is more like art for Emil's own sake than for getting anything from the crowd. Naked, it still feels as he is wearing a dress, because there is an inner world he cares about not people being shocked / entertained by someone taking off his clothes. For me it was all about energy. Their LP sounds like a draft of something and I like it when music is being silent about something, when that something is articulated in the listener but has no trace, just reference on the record. Live they could bring the tension alive. The repetitive, hypnotic riffs that made average hardcore riffs into the butt of a joke, with them—the riffs—being mockingly heavy even when sometimes it all felt like a very thin knocking; and it worked perfectly as the instruments held a leash for the music's own power.

It was a hardcore show but so many people came to see the show and stayed dancing and letting the groove erupt in themselves. Let the difficult primitivism get them and these nasty hardcore songs morphed into the rhythm that rock'n'roll invented. We were not talking about too much philosophy after the show but even in their rawest, practical approach they sounded like a hardcore band that writes riffs *l'art por l'art*, not for stage dives. The idea that the *Bullshit Detector* compilations stood for is synthesized here perfectly; this is not just playing music however you feel like, but playing whatever you feel like. Punk is great when even if it sounds like shit you can hear the punk was willing to do everything to play these songs while punk is bad when it sounds shit because the band was hardly willing to do anything to play their songs. I can hear ideas behind Dawn Of Humans.

I'm glad so many young gals and guys had come to see them. We ended up smoking in the toilet, while I was watching the band gamble with each other, during which I was sucking on my gin tonic being happy that for a long time I again did not lose any money on a show.

I also figured out who I respect the most from the deepest depths of my heart, those kids who are for decades going to shows all alone, just being here for the music, the message, the groove whatever they get out from it but not for the socializing bullshit. I bet they are a bit lonely but as the atheists who live as religious people are supposed to, they do all and expect nothing. Bow down your heads in front of the loners.

We also played with Dawn Of Humans in Vienna thanks to George's invitation. He is still one of my favorite drunk sights, as he just smiles, winks and represents punk. I also had fun hanging with Marat and Paco who came along with Dawn of Humans. Especially spending time with Marat talking about hanging with younger people, focusing on more mellow things than being fucked up all the time and hanging around, not taking punk super seriously. That seriousness is wrapped up with religious devotion in which even the simplest acts of kindness are glorified to a level where everybody starts to talk about impenetrable bullshit. Language falls on them. Punk is not difficult, you either feel it or soon will leave it. Read books instead of only lyric sheets. Don't listen to people telling you what to do even if that's me. Have questions and learn and try to be yourself, even if that's moshing to brocore. If there is anyone who's into moshing to bro-core and reads this—in the magazine, not on my blog—then please contact me and I'm gonna send you my Righteous Jams *Demo* 7". Obviously it's a bootleg!

Went to see Thurston Moore play protest songs against right-wing enslavers on a boat here at Budapest. His whole set sounded like "The Diamond Sea." I was satisfied since that is one of my favorite songs ever, even though *Confusion is Sex*-era takes the throne in the Sonic Youth wing of my music palace. I have to say I hate people at random shows and this crowed was so random. Someone who stank like shit was whistling along to whatever happened on the stage. I sort of like it when someone just goes wild and screams with the band even if s/he doesn't know the lyrics, it's a cool interaction, I guess, while I find it really ambivalent when I smile and bang my head during a show when the band's singer screams as s/he is dealing with the deepest shit of her/his life. But at a show like this when you don't have to be a Futurist thus there is no need to apparently interact with whatever the band's music communicates, why the fuck do you whistle? If that's your true vibe, then be my guest, but does this person really whistles at home too when he hears "Death Valley 69"? Also why is that at punk shows people don't always bump into each other and sit in each other's face? Fuck society!

Local punk shows, house parties, no shitty beer, mailing people. Lately I tend to listen to podcasts at work rather than bands. I went through the *Slice Harvester* episodes and spent hours at work listening to *Turned Out A Punk*. They are great for the same reasons why punk writers are, through interviews they present a better, much more interesting world that is made up by punk coolness, as a secret club, a nook where you hide yourself with your treasures and just care about whatever interests you. These also made me think about punk, how we approach punk, how we approach things while being a punk. I ended up asking, what did I get from punk? These were opportunities I was not afraid to take. To be whatever I wanted. But even though I won't list them out here, these could work even outside of basement shows and three chord songs. I only need to be hungry, diligent, young, ugly and smart. Lately, I wanted to learn about all the different movements in art. I found an old *MRR* column on An Introduction to the Situationist International that has a paragraph on how the Feederz had misinterpreted the idea. This left the Feederz devastated who obviously used the letters section to point out how Bill Brown was wrong and this all has culminated in a hyper-intellectual beef. I want my punk to be something similar.

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This is the last part of three of a tour diary I wrote when I jumped in the van for a week with SEX DWARF when I was in the US last year.

PITTSBURGH (Sunday, November 16th)

It was only a three-hour trip to Pittsburgh from Cleveland, which felt like nothing after the last few all-day drives. I didn't think any show could beat Detroit, but Pittsburgh was a party, and people got wild. We got into the city and Jimmy drove to fill up the vegetable oil in the van at an independent DIY gas station, which was an empty lot with a one-tonne container

on the back of a semi-truck parked there. By coincidence, ten days later I'd go to dinner in Toronto with the guys from COKE BUST and find out the van was hired off one of them for the tour. Jimmy then drove to show the band Pittsburgh's last steel mill (which was dark, dreary and awesome) on the ugly side of town, but then got lost on the nice side of town trying to find his way back to the venue, which was around the corner from his house. The show was in a basement of a small apartment block. The bands on support were EEL, DRUG LUST and TWO TOWERS. The stairs came down into the middle of the basement, and I set up merch at the end of an "L" shape, the bands setting up on the other end. We got there with some time to spare so I took a walk to buy some OJ for my vodka. It was nice to walk by myself and stretch my legs, after a few days of only sitting in a van.

I was interested to see what a band called TWO TOWERS would be like; unfortunately they didn't really hit my expectations. Tight for a new band but I would be more lenient on their simple hardcore if they were teenagers. After watching a song or two, I wandered back over to the merch table to stand by myself and drink. DRUG LUST were on next and I was super stoked because I'd heard the 7" and thought it was killer, but had never had the opportunity to see the while in the US. They came across a lot noisier than the 7", and I had a hard time picking out any songs I was familiar with. I still enjoyed the set even though the crowd was being stale. Lukas was wearing a balaclava and was creeping or falling around the crowd like a pathetic lost soul. On next was EEL. I'd already seen them a few times, most recently at Varning and before that on my trip here last year. Due to my inebriation I watched half of their set, jumped and pushed some people around, then retreated back to the merch desk to hide out and continue drinking. There was no angle grinder this time. The crowd was still being boring until Jimmy called them out for being a bunch of "pussies." SEX DWARF were up next and last. I moshed hard with an empty beer box for half the set then retreated (again) back to the merch table. Stood around for the rest of the set being a drunk. It was an early show, ending at 9 pm on a Sunday. Honestly though, throughout this tour I didn't have much concept of time in the nonstop spiral of show, party, little sleep, long drive and repeat. The show ended and I got into a long conversation with John from DRUG LUST while still at the merch table. He had brought a bunch of DRUG LUST stuff over for Sex DWARF to have, and we ended up talking about his band and whatever else. It was around 9:30 pm and Foat and Per were wearing bondage gear and whipping each other with belts while a bunch of people had a dance party around them. This went on for a while. Per left the stage and Foat went on for a bit by himself, karaoke style. The dance party continued for a little longer until we packed up and moved the party to Jimmy's. That was short lived, and everyone moved on to the Rock Room to continue the night. I hung back at Jimmy's and had a quiet one, spending the next few hours flipping records in the empty house instead.

The keys to the van went MIA, as did everyone in the morning while we scrabbled around trying to find people and get all our shit together. We drove back to the basement venue to load in the gear, and Cat—whose basement it was—jumped in the van for the last two shows of the tour. There were no seats left, so she got the shit seat (even shittier than the middle back seat) sitting on the ground between the driver and the front passenger. Which was kind of a good seat because you got to DJ, except that it wasn't actually a seat.

RICHMOND (Monday, November 17th)

We got into Richmond and went straight to the show at Strange Matter. Out of the five bands on the line up—PARASYTIC, VISIONS OF WAR, SEX DWARF, WRATHCOBRA and NO TOMORROW—four of those were from out of state, two or three of those being internationals. It was a decent turnout for a Monday night. The merch area was lined up against the wall opposite the bar. I had full view of the stage, so I stood behind the table the whole night, chatting to other merch sellers, having ciggie breaks and playing on the arcade games near the toilets up the back. Although I had a great view of everything going on, I didn't pay attention so there's no show review for this one. After the show Nikke let off a bunch of fireworks, and cops (or college security who think they're cops) were driving up and down the street almost immediately. They came up and questioned him, and it was funny how smooth he was about the situation, saying he didn't know who let them off even though the carpark at our feet was littered with empty shells. We went back to a house where a bunch of the bands were crashing. It was a really nice place and while most others stayed up drinking, our lot pulled out sleeping bags almost immediately looking for good floor spots to snooze.

NEW YORK: THE LAST SHOW (Tuesday, November 18th)

We stopped for food at Waffle House leaving Richmond on the way to New York. I ordered coffee and hash browns while the chef asked if we were in a band, then told us how he saw Judas Priest once. Some of the guys weren't happy because they had wanted to go to IHOP at some point in the trip, which hadn't happened. Since there wasn't one around, they went to Denny's across the freeway instead. It was the last long drive. There wasn't much of a vibe in the van. It just seemed more relaxed because we knew there was no show we had to go to tomorrow; tonight was the last one. Everyone was a little tired and exhausted, looking forward to getting out of the van but at the same time wishing it could keep going so we could all keep hanging out. Through all the stops and city traffic, maybe getting a bit lost, we turned up late to The Acheron in Brooklyn. It was around 10 pm. The show had already started, but going in the crowd was small and sour. The merch setup was in full view of the stage. I repeated what I'd done at almost all shows I'd been at on the tour and got hammered behind the merch desk, supports rushing by, not being able to write about their set before the memories left me. When SEX DWARF played everyone just stood around, even though the band went gung-ho just like all the other shows. Nikke jumped off the stage at one point with his guitar and was running around into people but it still didn't inspire any excitement within them to join in. It was disappointing they couldn't end their tour with a bang, but we all celebrated the end of tour anyway with shots and hugs and more shots. WHITE WARDS played at some point but I don't remember seeing HUNTED DOWN or NANDAS. I do remember it being really cold, and beer getting spilled all over the SEX DWARF records on merch display. Twice. Almost certain that wasn't my fault though…

After more shots and whatnots, we all got in the van and went back to where we were staying, with Mike from SAD BOYS. He had driven the first few shows of the tour, then gone back to NY after the Philly show with his van. I passed out on his kitchen floor and missed the party again. Since my account of the night is vague and broken, I asked some other people in the van for their account of the night.

Only Foat got back to me: *OK, so we drove all day and showed up a little late for the show. By the time SEX DWARF played, most punks were in the other room getting drunk, so not many people saw them, and it was the weakest show on the tour.*

WHITE WARDS played, but I missed them cuz I was too burned out on seeing bands I barely care about, and I wanted to get drunk and eat burgers. We all got wasted, and I ended up shirtless with Cat's bondage strap on (again), and I wrestled Mike in the middle of the bar, and won by executing a sharpshooter on him! We went back to Mike's after stopping for sandwiches, and I forced everyone who was still awake to listen to the Canadian SUBHUMANS and I got emotional talking about how they were the most important Canadian punk band of all time. Kinda weird in hindsight as the singer Wimpy died of a heart attack a week or two later.

In the morning I woke up realizing I'd slept through my alarm (set for 5 am, a little unrealistic) and missed my bus to Toronto. So I slept a few more hours, then hung out with everyone that day until it was time to drop SEX DWARF off at JFK for their flight back to Sweden.

Even the most punishing parts of the tour are parts I look back on fondly—the long drives every day, lack of proper meals, nowhere good to sleep…Obviously all these things are to be expected in this situation and just because they sucked, doesn't mean they were bad, y'know? Probably the best part was being exposed to all the local supports in each city and finding out about a bunch of great bands, the ones that you go to look for online and they have no presence

there. Bands you can't find any other way but by going to their cities and going to shows. Diamonds in the rough. Everyone brought their own personality to the tour but I have to give props to Foat (for the stories) and Per (for being an all-round wise-yet-party punk kinda guy). Also Jimmy for bringing me along and—OK, props to everyone. "Missiles" by the SOUND will forever take me back to a shitty van full of loud punks on a long, cold road to the next show.

When I was in high school I had a fanzine with some friends. It was called *Seizure* and I think we did four or five issues before our little crew fell apart. I worked in a copy shop and printed lots of zines and flyers for people in the scene. I did most of the in-person interviews, an enthusiastic young punk with a walkman. I interviewed Reagan Youth, Dead Kennedys, Subhumans, Black Flag, Black Market Baby, and a few others. We did some interviews by mail as well. I found Jello and Dick Lucas to be very engaging and well-spoken. Jello, you could tell, was interviewed a lot and was used to the limelight. Dick and the rest of the Subhumans were really nice guys and, even now, when they roll through town, they remember me as the guy that they had a discussion about straightedge with in 1985 in the basement of the 9:30 Club. Dave from Reagan Youth was pretty stoned. Black Market Baby spent most of their interview telling me they weren't a hardcore band. I was so pumped up on hardcore I couldn't understand why they *wouldn't* want to be associated with it, which probably made for a funny conversation. I looked everywhere a few years ago for the original interview tapes, but they are long gone, victims of punk house pilferage or beer spills in the late '80s.

My interview with Henry Rollins was never printed in the zine. I am rather fascinated that after all these years Rollins seems so popular in punk and popular culture. I don't hate the guy or anything, he just seems kinda corny and hasn't had much to do with hardcore for many years, beyond appearing as a talking head in music documentaries. Anyway, I remember some of the highlights of that interview. He was really, really into hating the police. He talked about how he wanted to sit on the side of the freeway with a high powered rifle and shoot the C.H.I.P.S. off their motorcycles as they came down the road. In the middle of the interview, there was a couple horsing around in front of the 9:30 Club. A guy was running up and down with his girlfriend ridding him piggyback. She was wearing some shiny, tight leather pants and Rollins just lost it. "That's the most beautiful thing I've ever seen...except the desert man." That dude was a trip. That was the third time I saw Black Flag and they were pretty weak. They did a lot of that "Side B of *My War*"-type stuff, slow jams with the heavy Mountain or Budgie influence or whatever. The first two times I saw Black Flag were off the hook, huge shows, massive pits and tons of energy. That last show was pretty lackluster. I want to say it was in the summer of 1985.

Fast forward a few years, and let's talk about Nirvana. For tons of people just a few years younger than me, Nirvana is a super important band. I remember right before they blew up. Nirvana played the main room at First Ave. I dimly recall hanging out at home alone listening to Extreme Noise Terror, Doom and Napalm Death records while everyone I knew went to see this new band. They had played me *Bleach* and I didn't connect with it at all. Now I kind of regret not going. I've grown to appreciate Nirvana, especially in comparison with the popular music that has followed since. This was probably the last gasp of anyone with real talent or creativity making it to major label status. This band still doesn't connect with me the way they do with a lot of other people, but for major label rock music, it's pretty good. I wonder how different the narrative would be if this band had stayed on Sub Pop. I mean, the story goes, Kurt was a loner with a lot of creative energy, who discovered underground music and wrote all these catchy songs. The band signs and the instant popularity drives him to despair. He finds an enabler, sinks into drug abuse and, eventually, suicide. If the band had stayed on a major indie, they would probably just be a well-respected band now with a few cult albums always in stock at your record shop and well-represented on t-shirts and other swag. I mean, they didn't have to make that deal with the devil. Bands don't become superstars anymore based on the quality of their music. They become superstars based on marketing, publicity, and management. Turn on your radio, and you will see what I mean. There is not a lot of talent at that level, but a lot of money is involved in keeping that wheel forever turning.

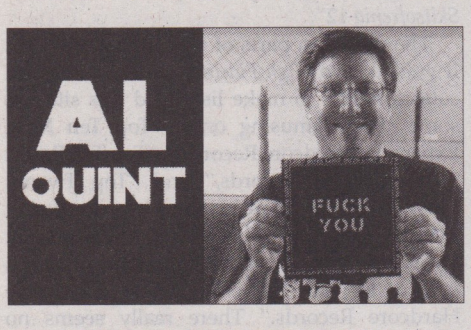
There is a really cool website called "Swedish Punk Fanzines." I personally have come to think that the overall effect of the internet on hardcore has been somewhat more negative than positive. But this kind of site is one of the most positive uses of this medium. It's a great clearinghouse of information about hardcore from the Nordic region. The site is chock-full of archival information about cassette-only releases, Swedish fanzines, a huge archive of records with MP3s, interviews, and more. I spend a lot of time on this site and every time I either discover something new or look at a band/record I already knew in a fresh light. For example, as I type this I am streaming the under-rated '90s rager by Harass, one that until quite recently was dollar-bin fodder, but has recently gained some major respect with those dedicated to the raw punk genre. I got to contribute to this site a while back waxing nostalgically on my love of the Riistetyt *Skitsofrenia* 12".

The most fun parts of this site are the lists. If you've seen *High Fidelity*, you know record collectors like to make lists, and this site has some pretty amusing ones. "Top Ten Most Expensive Hardcore Records," "Top Ten Rarest Swedish Punk Records," and "Top Twenty Most Essential Nordic Hardcore Records." Even to hardened collector scum like myself, I was pretty taken aback at the recent prices posted to the "Top Ten Most Expensive Hardcore Records." There really seems no end in sight for the upward trend for the most sought after collectible hardcore records. I paid eye-watering prices for some of these records not too long ago, which now seem like bargain basement compared to current prices. I am told that the prices of the rare surf/garage records of a generation earlier eventually leveled off. However, hardcore seems to continue to grow in influence. At least it seems to me to be growing in influence and interest more than the surf/garage scene with collectors. That said, this is only one fun part of a really cool site that's worth some time reading and listening to, with so much great hardcore punk has come out of the Nordic regions. I remember once I was driving a band from Sweden, who shall remain nameless, and they looked over the lineup for a festival and the guitar player said "So many good bands in Sweden and Denmark, yet so few in America." I had to laugh.

I hope everyone had a chance to pick up the recent *Negative Insight Fanzine* with the Chaos UK 7". This was the "Bristol Breakout" issue and had a wealth of information about all those great and influential Bristol bands like Chaos UK, Disorder, Amebix and Vice Squad. One of the Bristol bands that is a bit outside the main narrative is Onslaught. Most people know Onslaught for their totally crushing 1985 crossover/metal LP *Power from Hell*. I remember some heated arguments between punks and metalheads if that was a metal record or a hardcore record when it came out. It was too metal to be hardcore and too hardcore to be metal. Which makes it pretty much perfect to me. Prior to this incarnation though Onslaught was a hardcore punk band. They put out some really killer demos that are more in the Discharge/Varukers vein. I know these from tape trading, but only just learned these demos were released on vinyl a few years ago by metal label Back on Black. You know, that label with the *terrible* .jpg cover art. If you can make it past the barrier of the cover art it's great to get this material on vinyl, at last. The only song that carried over to their metal era is "Thermonuclear Devastation of the Planet Earth," which works pretty well as both a metal or a hardcore song, although one speculates it was meant to have more of a political skein in the punk incarnation. I honestly think I prefer *Power from Hell*, but this material is still

pretty cool and forms a missing link between hardcore and black/death metal.

I haven't bought a lot of new records lately, but this Horrendous 12" is most ill.



WHATEVER HAPPENED TO TINA MILLOT?

I was doing some spring cleaning not too long ago (it's still spring, as I type this) and was going through all the crap in the rickety wooden desk that I've owned since I was around ten, complete with my name carved into it. It serves as a TV stand but still holds various treasures—old eyeglasses (god, those aviator frames—what the *fuck* was I thinking?), plastic mini football helmets, a baseball signed by Wendell Kim AKA "Wave 'em In" Wendell, one of the worst third base coaches the Red Sox ever had, and a banana yellow Panasonic Toot-a-Loop radio that was my sister's but somehow ended up in my possession and ended up with a sticker of the underrated Boston band SORRY plastered on it along the way. I think it still works, too, but it needs a battery.

Mainly, though, it's various clippings, photos, report cards and papers I wrote from grade school through college and assorted lyrics I wrote for my various bands—some of which I should burn before they're discovered. There's a cute half-page essay I wrote in the second grade about "The Nicest Person I Know," who was a *"very good girlfriend and name is Amy Esterkes.... I love her and might even marry her. She will be my girlfriend forever."* Amy was one of my many grade school crushes—after Linda Weiner in the first grade (she peed her pants outside when we had a "date") and before I moved on to Christiana Beatrice in the third grade and Tina Millot in the fourth. Tina quickly quashed my romantic intentions by scratching my face when she found out I liked her. The school nurse got a big kick out of that one. Yes, I remember all this shit. Amy claims I was the first guy who ever kissed her—she told that to Ellen when they were chatting at one of our high school reunions. In all honesty, I don't remember that but I'm pretty sure she didn't scratch me like Tina did. As for that essay, my teacher Mrs. Lane left a comment on it before I brought it home—*"you better watch him!!"* Mrs. Lane didn't always watch me that well. She once sent me out in the hall because I'd been misbehaving and then forgot I was out there until school ended. It was only half an hour, at least. Maybe I was singing ELECTRIC PRUNES or BLUES MAGOOS lyrics too loudly.

My college doesn't even exist anymore—well, the school I went to at Boston University, the School of Management *AKA* SMG (*AKA* School of Money and Greed). SMG recently changed its name to Questrom School of Business. That's because some rich guy named Allen Questrom (hey, same initials as mine!) donated $50 million to SMG and they changed the name to honor him. So instead of my alumni info being listed as SMG '82, it's now Questrom '82. Not that it really matters in the grand scheme of things but that irks me a bit. It irks me that my school's name has been eradicated and the fact that someone, for all intents and purposes, bought the name. If you try to put your school as SMG on that well-known social network starting with F, it switches it to Questrom so I changed it to just going to Boston University and, in the description, said I'd been in the School of Management. Yes, I know it's a first-world problem. And it's not like I have lots of great memories of BU although it wasn't all bad and I really can't complain about the education I got. I could still kick myself for not taking a course with the great historian Howard Zinn, though. He was still teaching while I was there.

There was a paper I wrote for one of my senior management classes—it might have been Business Policy but it doesn't say which one. It was titled "Attitude Towards Work" and I began by saying that work has always *"played a central role in my life."* I mentioned how I'd get my schoolwork done ahead of time so I wouldn't have to worry about it last minute. That has *definitely* changed during my years as an *MRR* columnist and I'm sure my mom is tsk-tsking me, wherever she is.

Then I got to the part about work for pay—that I felt as though I couldn't enjoy my leisure time unless I'd earned it through hard work, saying that it was fulfilling to be rewarded with two days off after having worked hard the entire week. My parents' philosophy was work comes first, above all else. I wrote about how I went into work for a few hours on a day off even though I had a guest staying with us who I didn't get to see all that much.

Ah, yes, that good ol' American work ethic. Work hard and you'll be rewarded. The gap between the highest paid and lowest paid is OK because, dang it, they've *earned* it and so can you!! What a fucking crock. A friend of mine just got offered a full-time job in a restaurant with zero benefits. Nada...no insurance, no sick time, no paid holidays. He was looking into it because he has a long commute with his current full-time job but he's keeping it because it does have some benefits. The standard of living for working Americans is pathetic when compared with the rest of the industrialized world. Americans have been made to feel guilty for taking time off even if they *have* earned it. That their jobs could be at risk. And they seem to accept it, scoffing at those lazy Europeans and Scandinavians with their socialized medicine, longer vacations, better work hours and less income inequality. It makes me want to ask "... and the problem is?"

The state of things makes me think of the lyrics to the JAM's "Smithers-Jones," after the protagonist has been sacked. *"It's time to relax, now you've worked your arse off / But the only one smilin' is the sun tanned boss / Work and work and work and work till you die / There's plenty more fish in the sea to fry."* I know the JAM were a UK band but ain't it the truth, at least in this country?

Anyway, the paper did have a happy ending, in addition to the A-grade. I wrote that I couldn't *"imagine spending my life doing something that I do not enjoy, no matter how much it pays...I also hope that my job will never so dominate my life as to squeeze out my other interests...I should not feel guilty for enjoying life and should try to allow proper room for both work and leisure."* It took awhile but that did eventually happen, to an extent.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO PUNK ROCK?

Nothing, of course...It's still alive and well, and some of the records reviewed below prove that point. Starting in Boston (by the way, no native Bostonian calls it Beantown...) there's the debut vinyl from SADIST, a three-song 7" called *The Shadow of the Swastika*. Noise-drenched hellions, only not so noisy that it drowns out the actual songs. The title track is a mid-tempo pounder with Tim's reverbed vocals accompanied by guitar flange, thick bass-lines and electronic effects. "Minotaur's Maze" picks up the pace before morphing into the pounding "Mask." Their live show is attention-grabbing and they pull it off in the recorded format, as well. (no info)

LEATHER DADDY have improved quite a bit over time and emerge as a pretty damned good band on their first, self-titled 7". Thumping punk in a mid-to-fast vein, with a hint of UK82 along the same lines as another local band, SAVAGEHEADS. Lauren sings in a pissed-off cadence and the lyrics come from a personal perspective—given the finger-pointing nature, I'd imagine at least one person has attracted her ire (*"I dream at night of smashing your head"*). Not polished and that works to their advantage, with an appealing grittiness. (Failure Recordings, failurerecordings.com)

Philadelphia band LATEX, have a similar musical approach as LEATHER DADDY on their own self-titled 7". There used to be a TV ad for an airline that said, "What's there to do in Philadelphia?", and it showed the usual tourist attractions like the Liberty Bell and the god-awful cheese-steak places. I'd say checking out a show with this two man/two woman band would be something to do in Philly or anywhere else they're playing. Rough, high-energy, pounding punk with irritated-sounding vocals and that's the worldview, best expressed on "Hopeless Days." (World Gone Mad, aaronjm@epix.net/Sensual World, sensualworldrecords@gmail.com)

BLANK SPELL are also from Philly and follow up a pretty damned good demo with their first vinyl effort, also self-titled. A merger

of hardcore adrenaline and goth-tinged guitar, creating a dark and haunting ambiance. There are echoes of early DIE KREUZEN in Cassidy's playing, accompanying her forceful vocals. It's the speed that moves it out of pure death rock territory. It's hard to wallow when going full-tilt (World Gone Mad, aaronjm@epix.net)

I saw Olympia band VEXX play one hell of a set in an Allston basement not too long ago. Super-catchy '70s-inspired punk rock'n'roll with a hint of glam but the real attraction is vocalist Maryjane Dunphe. At times, she sounds like she could be a long-lost relative of Penelope Houston, but a bit more unhinged sounding. On their new *Give and Take* EP, "Black/White" is one of the catchiest, stick-in-head songs I've heard all year. Gigantic hooks, while Maryjane's vocals work in and around the music. "Sleeping In The Attic" is a brief, fiercely-rockin' corker. I'm not quite as enamored with the more ballad-like "Walking In The Rain" and the shuffle rocker, "Flattened Scenes", is OK but "Black/White" is *the* song here and an inescapable earworm. (Katorga Works, katorgaworks.bigcartel.com)

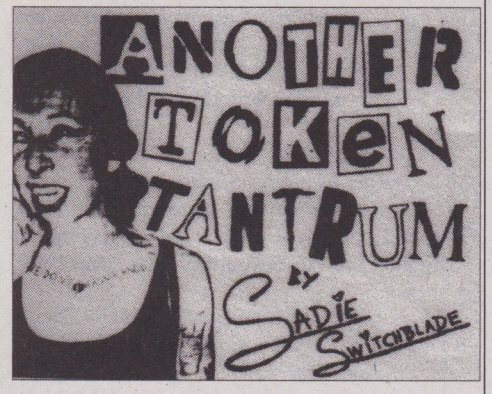
Next we have two violent UK bands. Well, in their names, anyway and I suppose you could say the same for the musical content. VIOLENT ARREST have a new vocalist, Welly from Artcore zine and formerly of the more-melodic FOUR LETTER WORD, but nothing else has changed on their new *Life Inside The Western Bloc* album. Violent Arrest have always had an '80s US hardcore inspiration and that remains the story. Welly has toughened up his vocals for this band, matching the full-bore blitz this band have always traded in. Starting with a sample from one of the best movies of all time, *Network*, Violent Arrest come storming out of the gates with their politically-driven hardcore punk—"The Game Is Rigged," "Wage War," "Our Dearly Deported" —you get the idea, and life's dehumanization process is tackled for "Grind You Down." The CD tacks on their previously vinyl-only "Distorted View" album, done with their old vocalist Steve and there's one song from a split with ENDLESS GRINNING SKULLS and a cover of the MAU-MAUS' "Clampdown." I'd say they've got it down at this point. (Boss Tuneage, bosstuneage.com)

VIOLENT REACTION's second album "Marching On" dishes out straightedge hardcore done in a tough, bootboy fashion. VIOLENT REACTION started as a solo project for vocalist Tom P (kind of how BOSTON STRANGLER started as a solo project for Ban Reilly). These guys have the same US hardcore-meets-Oi! inflection as a band like 86 MENTALITY did. Sharp and catchy, with efficient instrumentation and hearty sing-alongs, reaching anthemic proportions with the likes of "No Pride" and "Marching On." This is music borne of hatred—work, politics, bullies or "crust funders," as they call a certain group of punks. No-nonsense, mean-as-fuck sounding. (Revelation, PO Box 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615, revelationrecords.com)

Dutch band the SHINING have been playing crossover thrash for almost fifteen years at this point and show no signs of slowing down on their latest album *Infinite Reign Of Madness*. This would have been right at home on Metal Blade, Combat or New Renaissance back in the day, right down to the photos on the insert. What goes around, etc... No rewriting of the book or anything, just a pillaging good time with molten riffing and no acoustic interludes or progressive elements to mess anything up. The SHINING nail it, with clockwork, ripsaw precision (Pick Up, theshiningthrash.bandcamp.com)

And finally, we have a global summit of loud 'n nasty emanations from Australian band KROMOSOM and NYC's NOMAD. KROMOSOM are still best experienced in the live setting—watching Yeap's antics is worth the price of admission alone—but their KAAOS-meets-Japanese hardcore hits hard and fast. NOMAD really turn up the feedback and mine the DISCLOSE sound for all it's worth, complete with lyrics in Japanese. Noise noise noise! The screened cover looks kind of like an old Finnish 7" release. (Lengua Armada, kromosom.bandcamp.com)

Al Quint, PO Box 43, Peabody, MA 01960, subvox82@gmail.com, subvox.blogspot.com, sonicoverload.net



Damn, shit has been going off here the past few weeks. I really shouldn't talk about it 'cause DCSC ("dude, chill, security culture") but the result so far has been a lot of PTSD, fear, and anxiety for a lot of queers and PoC in town. I've been sleeping fitfully, if at all, with a hammer under my pillow and an assortment of other weapons scattered across my floor. It's fucking stupid and I hate it. I really can't go into it any more than that, so I won't, but I will just say that AUS-ROTTEN hit the nail on the head in '94: "Don't give them their freedom, because they're not going to give you yours."

OK, let's talk about the good things and not get stressed. Last night the band I sing in, G.L.O.S.S., played a dream-show at the Black Lodge in Seattle with locals SKITCH and MYSTERIOUS SKIN, SPETSNAZ from Portland, and PIG DNA from Oakland. I can't say enough good things about all of these bands. Each had their own sound, their own style, their own approach, making for a varied, stacked bill that felt unified in a rare way. SKITCH, aka the SKATE WITCHES (sick), were the surprise of the night, and instantly endeared themselves to the crowd with their fun skate punk, which was bolstered by youthful sincerity and an unironic GORILLA BISCUITS cover ("Cats and Dogs") to which I hopped up and down like a gay little bunny. They even covered "Deceptacon" by LE TIGRE at the end of their set, which was like, "What the heck?!", but somehow fucking ruled and everyone smiled. I love when bands cover multiple songs in the same set. It makes me feel like a kid again, like punk is new and fun and not just about how you stand in a horseshoe with your arms crossed and nod along to boring hardcore. And I love when young bands do whatever the fuck they want, because it's whatever the fuck they want, and their performances haven't yet been tainted with convention and cynicism. SKITCH really had me psyched on punk and my troubles forgotten in a way I needed and appreciated. I can't wait to hear what they record. I'm sure it will be great, three-piece punk, back to basics in the best way. Oh, and I should mention that everyone in the band skateboards. The singer even teaches skateboarding as her day job, so you know this shit is not for poseurs. "We're not a girl band—we're SKITCH!" Yes!

After SKITCH set the tone, MYSTERIOUS SKIN ramped the intensity up with a short and intense set of shrieking hardcore. Their drummer was a powerhouse, and their singer, Jenn, was ferocious on the mic. They ripped the lid off the place with the opening song "Piss In The Sink" and I smashed my head along, totally captivated for the duration of the set. It felt great to mosh with other ladies to sentiments like "DON'T TELL ME THAT I SHOULD SMILE." This was my first time seeing MYSTERIOUS SKIN and I'm psyched to see them more in the future.

Third on the bill was SPETSNAZ, who have quickly become one of my favorite active bands, playing absolutely devastating noise punk, a true mass of raw sound assault. This four-piece consists of a drummer who never gives up when tasked with relentless D-beat, a singer/bassist whose bass practically scrapes the ground while he howls propaganda, and a "noise person" (what do you call that?) who is basically a trashbag-clad hype-man who twists knobs, plays back samples, throws leaflets into the air, and occasionally steps out from the pulpit to command the mic. Maybe most notable is the lone-wolf guitarist, who is more deserving of the flying-v she slings than is any guitarist I've ever seen, with the sole exception being when I saw MOTÖRHEAD open for DIO and IRON MAIDEN with my big brother in the summer of 2003 (lol!). She is a total wailing banshee ripping an endless, desperate solo into the night, like a doomed starship's last transmission, and holds it all down with nimble footwork. She's really nailed the wah pedal "toothbrush" effect so essential to

DISCLOSE-style punk, and has created such a demented soundscape that every time her hand dashes up the fretboard I lose control of my body, clench my teeth and bash my fist back and forth above my head like a fucking troll going into battle. So powerful. While this band hasn't included lyrics with either of their two tape releases, their politics are on-point and as a unified band their ethos is forceful, nuanced, and leaves a lasting impression. SPETSNAZ is the complete package and you definitely want to see this band if you get a chance: total mind-control, alien-abduction punk, cybernetic soldiers sent back in time to save us all.

Taking (it) up the rear in this mutant parade is PIG DNA, who play stomach-turning, writhing noise punk. Their stage presence is like a bunch of C.H.U.D.s crawled from the rubble of post-collapse New York, found some weapons and broken instruments, and used them interchangeably to terrorize the remaining populace. Just revolting. PIG DNA's singer, Leatherfist, paces back and forth, stabs a combat knife into the air, and stares everyone in the eye like an unhinged maniac. And with lyrics like "Do you like danger? / Getting the blade / Got you off / Flash stuck / What's it like? / Knifed," who could really be blamed if they cower in the back of the room? The drummer has a pummeling style all her own that drives PIG DNA along like Furiosa behind the wheel of her rogue war rig, focused and determined, while the bassist and guitarist blast shit into the fucking stratosphere and beyond. The whole aesthetic of this band is perfect: visually engaging, musically painful, and lyrically terrifying, a mix of intelligence and utter stupidity that pays tribute to Japanese HC while taking the genre in a whole new deranged direction. Like all the best punk, PIG DNA is somehow familiar but is never derivative. "I KILLED THEM ALL / TO GET TO YOU." I fucking believe it.

So, damn, that's my glowing review this month. Check out all of the aforementioned bands if you can. By the time you read this, my testicles will have been excavated from their scrotal dungeon by the same surgeon who gave Isis King her cunt, because that's just the kind of high-class broad I am, OK? It remains to be seen whether I get to keep them or not, but if I do, I will suspend them in Lucite, shave them into slides, and attach the slides to gold chains for immediate sale on Etsy. Keep your eyes peeled. Oh, and holy shit, Boston buttheads WITCHES WITH DICKS have recorded their first record in eight years and I couldn't be more excited for its impending release. It's called *Not Just A Passing Season* and contains eight songs of stripped-down poppy punk in just nine-and-a-half minutes. Sample lyric: "The corporations and the cops? / Yeah, they don't give a toss / If they did, we wouldn't have / 'Ever feel like killing your boss?'" Who the fuck can argue with this genius? For whoever's counting, WITCHES WITH DICKS is the long-running but relatively low-output brainchild of BRAINKILLER/NO SIR, I WON'T/SUNSHINE WARD etc. guitarist Jeff Mardanes, and while this band sounds nothing like any of those, if you are a fan of hard-hitting, political pop punk, more poignant than your average hardcore band, it's tough to lose with WITCHES WITH DICKS. I look forward to this record, which comes out on Dead Broke later this year.

That about ends this column, y'all. Don't let the fuckers keep you down. Unless, like most of us, you have no choice in the matter, in which case...fight back, steal, pogo, and medicate.

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Mildred: Hey Johnny, what are you rebelling against?
Johnny: Whadda you got?
—Marlon Brando and Peggy Maley, "The Wild One"

They had lost politically but they had won culturally and maybe even spiritually.
—John Lichfield (writing of the '60s generation) "Egalité! Liberté! Sexualité!: Paris, May 1968"

The Independent, 9/23/08
If I had to describe my political philosophy, I would say: "Libertarianism now, fascism later."
—J.P. Nash

She was a child of Beatniks who came of age in the mid-1960s and lived in San Francisco. There, she was a part of the hippie counterculture, danced with Sufi Sam's dervish troupe in Precita Park, attended the 1967 Human Be-In/Gathering of the Tribes in Golden Gate Park, and belonged to the Diggers. After the "Death of Hippie" event in the Haight-Ashbury, as well as a series of high-profile drug busts, she moved to a commune in Olema in 1969.

He was a red diaper baby born of Communist Party members and lived in Berkeley. There, he participated in the burgeoning New Left, attended UC Berkeley on a Vietnam War student deferment, helped organize the takeover of Provo Park, and was a member of Students for a Democratic Society. After the 1968 Chicago Democratic Convention, and the "Bloody Thursday" riot in Berkeley's Peoples Park, he joined the Weatherman faction in 1969.

They met, fell in love, and married sometime at the end of 1970, beginning of 1971. Maybe it was at Vortex I, or during the Chicano Moratorium, or doing gestalt therapy at Esalen. Or perhaps it was at a Renaissance Pleasure Faire, or during the trial of the Chicago 8, or sitting in on classes at Black Mountain College. The exact date and place were never clear as she was hitchhiking around the country and he had gone underground after the Greenwich Village townhouse debacle. Besides, it was the '60s, or the second half of that decade anyway. If you remembered the '60s, you weren't there. They stayed together a couple of years, even had a couple of kids. But they couldn't make it work. She was indelibly eccentric and individualistic, New Agey spiritual and profoundly anti-political. He was rabidly political and atheistic, consensus-prone and surprisingly conventional. They got together on and off over the next decade or two, had a couple more kids, but finally decided to call it quits and finalize their divorce at the end of the twentieth century. True to form, they couldn't agree when to do that, she insisting that it be at the end of 1999 and he at the end of 2000.

As the 1970s dragged into the 1980s, and then the 1990s, they lived their separate lives. She watched as most of what she believed in during her counterculture days entered the mainstream. Not only had sex, drugs, and rock'n'roll become commonplace, but so had a quirky entrepreneurial individualism and appreciation for alternative lifestyles. She eventually moved to Portland as an apprentice pastry chef, where she now owns a regional mini-chain of successful artisanal bio-organic paleo-grained brick oven bakeries, writes a popular food blog, and lives comfortably in the Pearl District. He watched as the Left he fought for retreated from the streets, ultimately to retrench in its final academic bastion. Not only had revolutionary politics and Marxism given way to identity politics and French postmodernism, but the Left's scant successes had quickly dead-ended in political correctness. He eventually resurfaced with a teaching career in New York City, where he is now a tenured Sociology professor at NYU, lectures and writes on social movements, and lives comfortably in Park Slope.

And here's where I walk away from my all-to-obvious analogy. My initial point is that pundits who proclaim that those who fomented the 1960s "lost politically, but won culturally" commit the most basic error of constructing a straw man out of the notion that there was one, unitary "60s generation." There were two main currents to the 60s—the hippie counterculture and the Left/social movements—that share the coincidence of their proximate births and participant demographics, but little else. These two currents frequently interacted and occasionally merged, but ultimately they remained discrete, and experienced different fates. The hippies won culturally, and the New Leftists lost politically.

The conflation of different aspects of the

1960s is often not just an error of punditry, its a tactic of conservative *Kulturkampf*. Conservatives have long attempted to fabricate an imaginary, monolithic enemy-from-within, responsible for the decline of America and the corruption of its moral fiber since the '60s. The hedonistic hippie counterculture was in complete cahoots with a New Left become New Communist Movement, which was secretly in league with the Great Society welfare state, Democratic Party permissive liberalism, a mainstream media monopoly, corrupt socialistic unions, *ad nauseam*; thus inventing one sweeping, victorious anti-American juggernaut that every right-minded, freedom-loving, patriotic citizen needed to oppose by any means necessary. Culture wars have been the party line ever since the Reagan presidency. During that time conservatives moved American politics steadily, inexorably, to the right under an ideological variation known as neoliberalism, itself a supposed revival of 19th century classical Manchester liberalism. Because let's make no mistake here, whether the counterculture won and the Left lost in the short run, capitalism wins out in the long run. The individualistic "do your own thing" hippies fit in perfectly with America's self-reliant pioneer individualism and besides, everybody wanted to make money after the 60s.

I decided not to get cute and extend my original analogy to follow the children of my fantasy hippie/New Left couple by describing which one became a Wall Street broker versus which one became a punk rocker and so on. Most who went through the '60s as active participants, as well as their offspring, got jobs and became productive members of society, so what I'm interested in are those who rebelled against all that, even against the '60s, even for rebellion's sake, oftentimes forming their own countercultures in the process. Rarely did such counter countercultural rebellions lump both "parents" into a single target however. Heavy Metal as a counterculture maintains a direct line of descent from the '60s counterculture, which makes its rebelliousness all rather conventional, even traditional. Punk rock rebellion was against "all that hippie shit" and created its own counterculture based on "do it yourself" and "fuck shit up." But because punk was basically apolitical, it was easily swayed by politics, left or right, ultimately to descend into peace punks vs skinheads by the '80s.

There were those who had nothing against sex, drugs, and rocknroll, but who thought all that hippie "peace and love" was naïve bullshit. What chafed them unduly were the demands for political correctness which originated in academia, echoed around government and the media, and were blithely parroted by Gen X kids. These young white dudes, and they were mostly young white males, were angry about the influence of the PC Left in America. Inspired by the zine *Answer Me!* produced by Jim and Debbie Goad from 1991 to 1994, they created a rabid if limited anti-PC counterculture which, according to *Spin Magazine*, quickly transcended pissed off, working class whiteboy Jim Goad and his "fuck you and your feelings too" zine. There was the Unpop art movement, various publishing companies like Feral House, even an Angry White Male tour which featured Jim Goad, Mike Diana, Shane Bugbee, the Boone Bros., Skitzo, and King Velveeda. Lots of young angry white boys were plenty pissed that they now had to consider the perspectives of women, blacks, gays, and other minorities, and they believed their misogynist, racist, homophobic, frequently humorous invective was not "punching down" but rather "punching up" because, you know, liberalism and the Left were really in control.

Aside from Goad, the usual suspects in this post-60s contrarian counterculture included Boyd Rice, Brian Clark, Shaun Partridge, Adam Parfrey, Lorin Partridge, Nick Bougas/A. Wyatt Mann, Michael Moynihan, Larry Wessel, *et al*. As is invariably the case, antagonisms and rifts eventually split up these anti-PC counter countercultural bad boys, since they had really little in common other than their hatred of the Left, liberalism, and PC politics. Some drifted off into business-as-usual conservatism, others became neofascists, but most just wanted to make a buck. Their immediate heir was *Vice Media*, which at its inception as a magazine combined muckraking journalism with frat boy humor and soft porn skin mag aesthetics. What Lizzie Widdicombe described in "The Bad-Boy Brand" for the *New Yorker* as *Vice*'s early combination of "investigative reporting with a sensibility that is adolescent, male, and proudly boorish" has since been moderated for the sake of maximizing profit and moving into the mainstream. That leaves folks like Gavin McInnes—big Goad fan and ex-*Vice* cofounder fired for being unwilling to go along with the program—to continue the good fight ranting against the Left, liberals, and political correctness today.

One thing I find interesting is that right-wing libertarianism seems to be the default politics for those individuals intent on winning the culture wars while still snorting coke and watching porn. Goad might best be described as paleo-libertarian, while both *Vice* and McInnes are self-proclaimed libertarian. I think that claiming an absolute right to freedom of expression, aside from triggering such knee-jerk libertarianism, is invariably used as an excuse for their juvenile, rude, malicious, thuggish behavior. Once past hating on the Left, without their libertarian label of convenience, and no longer young, these angry white male morons would just be your run-of-the-mill GOP conservative good ol' boys, maybe with a smidgen of neo-Nazi wingnut thrown in to keep things interesting. Said another way, scratch a *Vice*-like libertarian and you might just uncover a fascist.

Ethan A. Russell wrote: "In retrospect people often seem embarrassed by that time—the late sixties into the seventies—as if suddenly confronted with some lunatic member of your family, once revered, now disgraced." (*Dear Mr. Fantasy: Diary of a Decade: Our Time and Rock and Roll*) Having experienced much of the '60s as a late hippie and New Leftist, I'm neither embarrassed by my life then nor do I revere that complicated decade now. I do think that efforts to frame things in terms of a singular "'60s generation" are misinformed and flawed at best, and at worst help to construct a demonic hollow man out of the '60s as a conservative culture wars ploy. The Angry White Male *shtick*—with Goad for real and with McInnes as pose—will be around as long as political correctness persists. But that's so, *so* boring.

(Copy editing by K Raketz.)

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... *My first novel* End Time *(AK Press, POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682), or* Fim *in Portuguese (Conrad Editora, R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil), is out of print. My second novel is in the works. I'm archiving past columns, and publishing current ones on my political blog, leftyhooligan.wordpress.com. My personal blog is gamatiasz.wordpress.com. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@icloud.com.*

I guess that, since you understood everything about microphones from this column a few months ago, you are now the proud owner of a brand new and beautiful microphone, right? I'm pretty sure you got away with the safe and familiar Shure SM58. Well, another great alternative to the SM58 is the Sennheiser E835 or E935. It is not that expensive compared to the SM58, yet it does respect the range of your vocals in a smoother way than the SM58, but that is just my humble opinion.

Anyway, with your fancy microphone, I assume you got yourself an XLR cable. If you didn't, well, unless you have a wireless microphone, you should get one. With both the microphone and the cable in hand, now comes the time to amplify the sound of your voice. For that purpose you need a P.A. system.

Most of the times you will plug your microphone cable into a soundboard. It might frighten you, but it isn't that hard to use. A soundboard is made out of strips, which can be seen as channels, and each of them are designed to receive a microphone output and drive this signal to the speakers.

Let's make it simple and clear. Get in front of the soundboard and face the first strip. At the top of the strip you'll find an XLR input (the

big one that looks like a smiley with 3 eyes)—just plug your microphone cable into it. At the bottom of that strip, you'll find the fader (the big button that goes up and down)—just push it down to the bottom. Above the fader, you'll find a button named PAN. The pan allows you to dial the sound of your microphone between the left and the right speaker. While it can be useful to mix a guitar or a bass amp to the left or to the right, you'd better just leave the vocals in the middle.

AUX pots? Well right now you can ignore these. These are useful for the sound person if you have foldback or in ears monitors, which you probably won't have anyway in a punk set-up. Bass/Middle/Treble? That's the EQ, or equalization. You can shape the sound of your voice with these, but at the moment you can leave them all at noon, and that will be more than fine.

Right under the XLR input, you'll find a much more interesting pot named "Gain". This one controls the preamp's input gain of each strip. This is probably the most important pot of them all. On the strip you will find a "solo" or "monitor" push/pull button. Well, just engage the one from the strip you're plugged in. Now, on the soundboard, seek some green, orange and red LEDs. You got them? Alright, they are here to help you set up the efficient gain input level when you're screaming into your microphone. Set the input gain so the LED goes high into green, a little orange when pushed really hard, but they should never go into the red zone. When these LEDs are turning red, it means that you've overloaded the input gain and that you're getting distortion from the soundboard. This kind of distortion, as opposed to tube amp distortion, isn't really pleasing to the human ear.

Once you've set up the input gain, now you can disengage the "solo" mode, and you can push the strip's fader and the two master faders to the desired volume in order to be on par with the other instruments.

If you end up pushing the faders high but still can't hear yourself singing, then maybe it's time to mess with the EQ. Always try to remove some frequencies before trying to add them. Remove a little bass or some mids, and if it doesn't work, then maybe add some treble. It's all up to your ears.

On a side note, a soundboard is close to recording software. If you have a soundcard and software, you'll set up your microphone for singing or even for recording purpose the exact same way. It's all about setting up the gain to a decent level that won't go into distortion (or what the pros are calling "clipping," because the gain become so high that it just clips some part of the sound wave).

If you don't have a soundboard, well, there's one option that is really not the best but will still do as a backup. You can plug your microphone into a guitar amp. In order to achieve this you have to purchase a little adaptor, like the Shure A85F, that is designed to turn your XLR cable into a regular jack cable, and that will also serve as a preamp to drive your microphone output to a guitar amp input level. Your microphone level is definitely way too weak to be amplified by a guitar amp, so you have to turn it into a higher level with that little thing. I promise it won't sound as good as a PA system, but it will do the trick if you have no other option.

instrumentsoneohone@gmail.com

ON MORE NOTHING

As of late or as of recently there was a hubbub about a corporate band playing at Gilman. It seemed that the defense was a combo of but it's secret/it's for a benefit. I wasn't paying enough attention to note whether or not they used ye olde defense of "If you don't like it, come to a meeting." This seems to be their defense when faced with being called out for allowing bands to play there that include rapists, too. To me the call of "You don't like it, come to a meeting" has always seemed slightly classist to me because it runs on the assumption that people have the leisure time or the ability to take time off or schedule work in a way where that would be doable. Besides that, I also just wonder why they don't follow their own guidelines? I know that punk is supposedly the land of no rules but for reals. You make your own rules—you make your own rules in order to have a welcoming all ages space—and then you have a band play there fairly regularly that boasts a member that killed his girlfriend.

Back to the corporate band...Why act anti-corporate and then allow a corporate band on your stage? I really don't give a fuck if people are chill with corporations or apathetic to fucked-upness or whatever. It's the bullshit of bullshit that bugs me. Why talk one way and then act another? It's so fucking square. I don't generally give a flying fuck if a band "sells out," as long as they're not trying to pretend they're not. I wouldn't give a flying fuck if some corporate band had a fucking residency at Gilman, if Gilman wasn't so blatantly against that. Why do I have to go to a meeting to make sure you stick to your supposed ethics?

You know, they could have played a bigger place and made more money for the benefit. They probably could have clicked their heels and gotten their own show together, not at Gilman. It seems kind of vain and playing favorites on the part of both parties. Nasty. You can still be square with a mohawk.

Moving on, I'm not about to spend a thousand words on that.

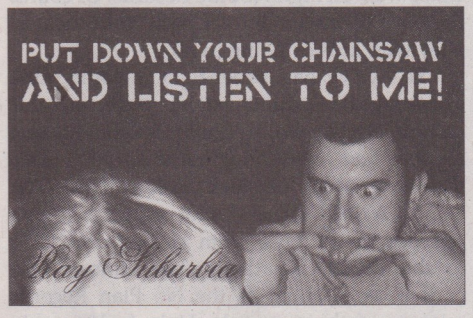
In other news, I'm having a life altering time and I don't know how I feel about it, or more that my emotions are like a left hook from I don't get it. I joined this band, Mozart composed (ha!) of mostly *MRR* associates. I woke up one morning still drunk and just wiggly enough to hustle. A couple days before I was talking with my buddy Jackson, and he was saying his new band was coming along but he had never played drums in a band, Grace had never played guitar and they didn't even have a singer. Anyway, I woke up and text Jackson to offer my services as a lead singer. I thought I was being funny, maybe I was being obnoxious. I don't know. I can't tell. Within an hour, I got a text back that just said, "You're in!"

I walk into our first practice and they just look at me and ask what I'm doing on the 25th. I don't know. OK, well, we got a show. We practice three times before this said show. I love a challenge, I love a deadline. A couple days before, I start freaking out. My band, Stillsuit, broke up in February, and not to toodillydoo my own horn, but people liked us. This is my first new, (I have other bands that existed concurrently), band post-Stillsuit, and this was the first new band from everyone in Stillsuit. I was at the record store which is never fun, it's just an uncool place to be, and I just really wanted to blow everyone away. Gotta be a big whoop right out the door. Is this like sophomore album stress? Like I have this legacy to live up to? Why do I care about this? I don't care about things like this. Everything is a process and a step in progress. This was just another thing I was doing. It freaked me out even more because that's not really how my value system works. A few days before the show, I was having a meltdown as I was talking to Max. He asked if I was going to cancel, which was a completely insane and unthinkable idea to me. You don't cancel a show. I was in this band called The Punks and once we were slated to play a show in a bar in Nebraska. We were scared, lazy and flush from this college show where we managed to finagle some insane guarantee, so we cancelled and got a hotel room. I related this story to a friend and she thought it was fucked up. What if just one person had shown up to see us? In the ten years since, I think I've cancelled shows a handful of times, and each time was inescapable and incredibly upsetting. I think I cried a couple times (toodillydoo). Anyway, I didn't cancel the show. Instead, I just remembered I'm a genius and if you act like you know what you're doing most people will believe you.

I was feeling weird, lost and bored so I took some acid in some hippy-dippy attempt to find myself. It was cool. I wrote some stuff, parts of this, and did some drawing and some painting. Then, at some point, it was like three am and my head was still buzzing. I was watching "Frasier," playing with the cursor on my computer and feeling bad about being entertained by it. Suddenly, I was covered in

negative weight. It wasn't my usual insecurity, there weren't any clear thoughts—just this bad creep feeling. I took some sleeping pills.

My mother loves to do this thing where if you're in a car with her, she'll turn off the radio and start asking about things you don't want to talk to her about, in this really gentle and loving way. She was a social worker for 30 years. She said the best way to get people to open up about things they don't really want to talk about, is to talk about it in a car. It's a space you can't easily leave from and it's not really easy to make eye contact. You don't have to look at each other. My mom was asking if I had ever done LSD. I was trying to talk about it in a way that made it sound like something I didn't do anymore, and she saw right the fuck through that. She just requested that I ask my doctor if there were any known interactions between my medication and whatever drugs I do asking, "Isn't your doctor into harm reduction?"



"I hate music. Sometimes I don't"
— The Replacements, "I Hate Music"

It's been brought to my attention that in the year and a half that I've been writing this column that I've never once written about music. In a music magazine. Oops. To be honest, I never got into punk for the music. It was mostly for the incendiary politics, cool clothes, and awkward moments at the edge of the pit. Maybe if at the first DIY show I went to there wasn't a massive pile on of jock mosh-bros in camo shorts and (insert Victory records band here) basketball jerseys freaking out like they just saw Jesus take a shit because a terrible band from the North burbs decided to cover Inside Out's quasi-Krishna anthem "No Spiritual Surrender" I would have been more into the music side of things. Instead, I was at the literature table (remember those?) reading as many reactionary and radical political pamphlets as I could. Instead, I would go to lame ska shows cause at least the music there was fun. Oh, the '90s. What the fuck...

Anyway, I digress. Music. Punk music. As glib as I like to be, I gotta admit that I wouldn't be writing in this zine if it wasn't for the music. So I guess since I got my cult, tech, mental illness, anti-beard, and immigration columns out of the way I should get on to my token music one.

Now that I've finally settled into life in Chicago, I've had the chance to regularly check out some more shows. The DIY venue scene here is really on fire right now, I've caught shows at the Mousetrap, Club Rectum, the 2040, Albion House, the Dollhouse, Old Mt. Happy, 86 Mets (RIP)—not to mention a shows at punk friendly venues/bars like Township, The Owl, The Burlington, Fizz, Liar's Club, Empty Bottle. Even saw a show in the 7" section of Logan Hardware Records.

I've been too broke to pick up any records lately, so I figured I'd talk about the some of the more impressive performances I've seen lately. Actually, just one show. The best show I've been to in the seven months since I've been living here: Marine Corpse/Warrior Tribes/Crude Humor/XZX/Ritalin OD @ The 2040.

Honestly, this show was easily the best show I've been to in a while. It always helps not knowing any of the bands beforehand—or really any of the people involved in the particular scene. No hangups, no drama masked as politics (or politics as drama).

First off. Marine Corpse. Holy fucking shit. I happened to get an extra day off of work, so my partner and I biked across town to catch a random basement show. Oh wait, it was Memorial Day, and I saw that a band called Marine Corpse was playing a show, and I wanted to celebrate the holiday. And also, we're running an interview with one of the people that live at the 2040 in my zine, and after editing the interview I was really excited to catch a show there.

Anyway, this sludgy hardcore band from Bloomington, IN completely blew me the fuck away. I couldn't help smile from ear to ear when the singer went into the crowd pumping chant of "We're here / we're queer / we're anarchists / we'll fuck you up!" from their song, "Total Wretch." Between that and the lyrics to "Landlords," where the only words are "I don't owe you shit motherfucker / get your hands out of my pocket," well, I remembered why I was happy to move back to the Midwest. The singer also talked about how he had to put on his day/work drag because he was a teacher in is norm life. Education punx are where it's at. Especially in a country that it completely dismantling its educational services or remodeling them after for-profit businesses. Anyway, you can check out their new album at marinecorpse.bandcamp.com.

The band that opened the show was Ritalin O.D., a bunch of younger punks playing spastic and angry old school hardcore. I'm pretty sure half of them left cause they had school in the morning. Their singer Derek prowled and failed across the stage like a man possessed. I'm a pretty big person, and I don't often feel physically threatened at shows, but during their set, I have to admit, I was kinda scared. Not that I think their singer would actually hurt anyone, but there was this air of "Fuck, this guy is getting some real shit out of his system and I unfortunately might end being a part of that process." I guess I shouldn't say that I felt threatened, but I felt uneasy and on my guard—something I haven't felt in a long time while a band played. The adrenaline and hyper-focus on my immediate surroundings made me enjoy Ritalin O.D.'s set even more. They're from the often completely overlooked western burbs region of Bellwood/Melrose Park. If this is what's going on out there, I need to get a ride out west, pronto. They got their new demo up for download at ritalinod1.bandcamp.com

Probably the most surprising act on the bill (I would *not* call it a band) was XZX. It was just a person with a laptop and a microphone. I later saw them described on the flier as "industrial glitch-punk." Yep. Perfect description. It was as if all the music was composed by running gifs through sound programs and haphazardly cut-and-pasting parts of beats to go over it. The vocals sounded like an alien trying to Skype on a 28.8 dialup. Of course, I mean all of this is *the best fucking possible way*. It's performances like this that remind me that sometimes (often) the punkest stuff out there is not punk rock. It's not music based on 60-year-old drag-ass rock'n'roll. It's 2015 and guitars are the new trombones and punk rock bands are the new swing bands. The whole time XZX was playing I kept thinking about how industrial music (not the '80s jack-your-body house/dance floor infused Wax Trax! Style, but the '70s SPK/Z'EV/Monte Cozzaza/Throbbing Gristle stuff) was the natural product of people born into, and growing up, in an era of metal and machines. Like how the sounds of birds and animals and the pastoral all found their way into classical music, the sounds of industry and urban isolation and the rhythms of production eventually seeped into the music of the late 20th century. And here we are in a digital age, one that actually began about the time that industrial music came out, but has since exploded because people found ways to profit of it. XZX is to the early 21st century as industrial was to the late 20th. It's music created by a someone of a generation that became accustomed to dialup modems, the sound of scratched CDs skipping. Ringtones coming from every pocket, barcode scanners in every store, computers CPUs churning, streaming audio/video stumbling as it buffers. This is some of the most modern music I've ever heard—yet somehow completely atavistic. I'm glad that Mez threw XZX on this bill, cause damn, it really blew my mind. And since it's pretty much impossible to web search the name, or any of the songs titles, here's an address to check out the music: xzxmusic1.bandcamp.com

When I learned that Crude Humor was on the show, I got a little excited. I had been hearing/seeing the name ever since moving to Chicago, but hadn't had the chance to catch them. While I wasn't blow away, I definitely enjoyed their set. They've got the whole noise rock thing down. I guess I never realized how much a thing that was again these days—that often blurry line of raucous hardcore turning into Jesus Lizard/Swans-core. Hell, one of them even had a cowboy hat. Go figure. There were

a couple moments where I lost some interest—noodly guitars and shredding has never really held my attention—but the energy they put out kept me at rapt attention. I definitely want to catch them again some time. I don't know why, but I felt like I was watching a decent performance by a normally much better band. Listen at: crudehumor.bandcamp.com

Here's something embarrassing: I totally forgot I had seen Warrior Tribes years ago. My band played with them at the Sodom and Gomorrah House in Chicago while on tour, and all I really remember from that show is that Monica from Autonomy's mom came to the show and got into a dance-off with Spooky in the pit while we played. Sorry Warrior Tribes... Anyway, I caught them in the middle of winter, but it was right after I injured my knee—so I spent their entire set sitting on a gross-ass couch in the back of Old Mt. Happy. They sounded fine, but as I learned after catching them at the 2040, they're a band you want to watch too. Not that they're going insane, there's just a groove that the band gets into that you can actually see in the performance. I've listened to Warrior Tribes recorded, and while the music and everything sounds great, they've yet to capture that swaggering saunter that makes them such a good live band. I've never said this before, but I really want this punk band to make a live album. Anyway, my opinion doesn't (nor should it) really mean shit, so listen to Warrior Tribes (loudly) via: warriortribes.bandcamp.com

END NOTES:

1) By the time you read this, the new zine im co-editing, *No Friends* #1 will be at the press. If you're interested in picking it up, shoot an email to nofriendszine@gmail.com Issue #1 comes with a split flexi with new Lumpy and the Dumpers and Ausmuteants songs.

2) Autonomy is also gonna be on tour on the West Coast when your eyes hit this page, so come on out to a show and say hi, if you want.

3) Shout out to a couple of Carbondale, IL punks that have made some rad documentaries. Mitch Mitchell made a great short doc about the radical basement drag queen Tammy Cannons (https://vimeo.com/129618155) and Bart Dziegelewski made a feature length about local musican/character Little Bluesman (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1PW9jHwuIzs). Up the middle of nowhere punx! Punk is big and beautiful.

4) We're working on putting on a small festival for next year's 30th anniversary of the Lost Cross house. Yep, that house has been continuously having shows/events/punks in it since 1986, making if the longest running punk house in the US (Sorry, Legion of Doom, we got you beat—never had a name change). If you've got any stories you want to share about your experiences with the house, or any photos, or are in a band that wants to play the anniversary, shoot me an email: stayinchicago@hotmail.com

I have to admit, the past couple of months were slow enough in terms of the kind of punk I enjoy that I was beginning to fear that there was a global slump in the nasty raw punk market. But the past couple of weeks have brought a virtual cornucopia of great releases from bands new and old. Thank goodness! The skin crawls at the thought of having to get into the kind of music other people like. Ewwww.

That being said, I'm starting off the column with something that really will appeal to a broad spectrum of punks, the fucking killer POX demo. A lot of bands appeal to the ghost of late '70s California punk, but fucking hell, POX bring the goods, an unholy blend of AVENGERS, U.X.A. (the handful of good tracks), and even X (yup, the songwriting is there, for real). It was the SAD BOYS connection that had me panting for this demo, but there's not much crossover between the two bands beyond the clean, to-the-point simplicity that frames these songs. POX strips away the gimmicks relied upon by other bands, to present every song like a gem on a pillow, with no studio tricks or out-of-place notes to distract. Get this, save this, put a pin in this shit; it's something really fucking special. (Voice From Inside Tapes, rawpunk@riseup.net)

Japan's the SAVAGES also tread on '80s LA territory on their demo CD, though their stuff is heavily influenced by classic Swedish and Japanese hardcore as well. The LA influence is most evident in the snotty vocals and melodic riffs of the disc opening "Dong-Teng," and carries over into "Boy," although "Boy" has some cracking guitar work that's definitely more Chelsea than Rikk Agnew. "World War 3" exists in a space somewhere between FEAR OF WAR and ASTA KASK, a mid-tempo stomper that walks a very fine line between punk and hardcore. The surprise of the disc is the closer, "Heart Beat," a kinda-almost ballad that would fit comfortably in the later POISON (ARTS) discography. Despite the disparate influences, the disc has a great flow and slick production that suits the mature songwriting very well. Given the quality of the material, it's not a surprise that this band is made up of ex-members of some serious heavyweights including RAW DISTRACTIONS, INTRUDERS, AVFALL, and ROUGH STUFF. Definitely a demo to watch out for. Don't let the rather pretty and elaborately folded vellum cover trick you into passing this up as some kind of mellow indie stuff. (thesavages2014jap@gmail.com)

Now, Canada's FLEABAG is definitely more my speed in terms of the stuff I usually drool all over, dumb pogo punk that's so simple that it recalls the Pogo 77 roster more than it does its ostensible UK influences. Yeah, this is total DISCOCKS style, right down to the EJECTED cover, a blazing "East End Kids" that more than does the original justice. "Social Capital" has more than a bit of early CASUALTIES in it as well, especially in the broken diction of the vocal. As someone who still laces up a pair of Doc Martens to go to work in a warehouse every day, I feel like I still have a bit of the credibility necessary to enjoy this kind of super-raw street punk, even if I haven't passed out drunk in public nearly as recently as the members of FLEABAG probably have. Hopefully you feel the same way. "Won't you join the spiky punks?" Oh, I would if I could, FLEABAG, and chaos walk all night. (Bottle Records. Of course there's no contact info. Check your nearest alley with kids drinking in it.)

So, we've had super-tight melodic punk and thudding dumb street punk in this column already. If only some kind of amazing reissue had come out recently to bridge those two styles. Oh fuck, look at these DVA MINUTA MRŽNJE EPs! A lot of stuff is getting reissued these days, from classic UK82 EPs to the DISCOCKS demo, but almost none of it is as essential as the No Plan Records reissues of these records. Holy fucking shit, this is amazing melodic street punk from the former Yugoslavia, produced in the midst of unbelievable chaos and very nearly lost to all but the most discerning collector. The '95 *Došao Je Kraj* EP was produced in an edition of 100 copies. 100!, despite the fact that it's easily as good as anything any other band was producing in the style at the time (or any other). I have no idea what bands to ascribe their style to, as I have no idea what records were available in Yugoslavia at the time, but this is perfect Oi!/punk, joining COCKSPARRER's R'n'R backbone to CLASH melodies, and while I have no idea if these guys were even aware of COBRA, there's every reason to compare their harder moments to COBRA's teeth-gritted tough Oi!. In a perfect world, "Zasto?" would be retroactively included on the *Punk and Disorderly* compilations. It's up there with MOSKWA's "Stan I Walcz" as one of the best Eastern European punk songs ever written. The second EP is solid as well, but exists in the huge shadow cast by the fucking amazing first EP. Both are worth picking up, but *Došao Je Kraj* might just be the best record reissued this year. (No Plan Records, noplanrecords.blogspot.de)

While it doesn't count as a reissue per se, I think it's appropriate to lump this SYUDAN JISATSU "No Gone Peace/Mescalin" 7" into that category, as these unreleased tracks were laid down at the same time as their *Demon Priest* EP. SYUDAN JISATSU have always been

a mystery, with rumors in the pre-internet age (and beyond) that the shadowy band included luminaries of the early Japanese metallic punk scene including Saveki on vocals. While definitely not the case, it's not hard to believe, given how masterfully the band performs the G.I.S.M./ZOUO style. "No Gone Peace" is a rumbling metallic churn, driven by a sharp riff that's straight out of *Detestation*, a crazed shouted/spoken vocal that will have you checking under your bed for crazy uncle SKV, with a wavering solo that nods to Randy Uchida (though he would have played it much better). "Mescalin" starts off faster and more ZOUO-styled, drops off into a spacey CELTIC FROST groove, and is capped off with a speedy race to the finish. Most will probably prefer the shorter, punchier *Demon Priest* tracks, but these two songs are undeniably killers and are well worth hearing, especially "No Gone Peace." Unfortunately this 7" was limited to a hand-numbered 111 copies, released from the same mystery label that released the original EP, so finding it will take some doing. Keep your eyes peeled, and cross your fingers that "Fist Fight," "Human of the Ghoul," and "Erotic Guy Machine" might one day pick up their instruments and present the unsuspecting public with another serving of near-perfect metal/hardcore. (Helter Skelter, no contact info)

ASOCIAL TERROR FABRICATION have been carrying the banner for the new school of metallic Japanese crust for quite a while now, and they managed to sneak out a split EP late last year that I completely missed until just a few weeks ago. Much like their contemporaries DEATH DUST EXTRACTOR, ASOCIAL TERROR FABRICATION started out as a primitive stench-core band, worshiping at the altars of DEVIATED INSTINCT and DOOM. While DEATH DUST EXTRACTOR have moved in a more thrash metal direction, ASOCIAL TERROR FABRICATION have embraced the doom/death side of the Brit-core sound, as their track on this split ("Absolutely Power") reflects a strong PARADISE LOST/BOLT THROWER style. This split is very close to straight-up metal, though it retains a punk spirit in the lyrics and in the dedication to DIY ethics. Fans of STORMCROW or LIMB FROM LIMB will absolutely eat this up. Split mates FALSE INSIGHT are a much more straightforward crust band, albeit one that isn't afraid to throw down a galloping BOLT THROWER-style riff now and again (check out that fucking mosh riff towards the end of "Programmed Human!" Massive.) The harsh, shouted vocal is a nice change of pace from the usual crusty growl, and the thick, slightly muddy production compliments their sound beautifully. An excellent split for the metal punks out there from the diverse but always reliable Depression Records. (Depression, Mamezon 201, Hiranaka 420, Nisiku, Nagoya Aichi, 452-0843, Japan)

Finally, in another bit of catching up, I get to hear WARHEAD's first non- EP release since their 1993 CD! This CD came out via Blood Sucker Records late in 2014, but for various reasons I never got a copy. Fortunately, a vinyl release from 540 Records was in the works. Here it is, and it looks and sounds fantastic. Jun is one of the best and most distinctive hardcore vocalists in the game, and he's in top form here, as he packs lyrics into tight syncopated bursts and unleashes his high-pitched wail to full effect. Vocals aside, this is definitely a guitar album. Nearly every song has a memorable hook, the riffs are busy without ever approaching a metal sound, and the solos are tight, short and tastefully deployed. The weak drum sound is a bit of a bummer, but it's not so awful as to drag the album down by any means. Sprinkled among the new tracks are some welcome old favorites, including "Acceleration" (still one of my favorite Japanese hardcore songs of the '00s) and "Don't Give'n to Any Pressure" from the split with ORDER, which demonstrate the consistency of WARHEAD's style. Few bands can put a ten year-old track on their new record and have it fit seamlessly into the whole WARHEAD are WARHEAD, have always been WARHEAD, and fuckin' rule. Should have gotten this CD; it would've been a best of 2014 for sure! (540 Records, chaosintejas.com/540, Blood Sucker Records, bloodsucker-record.com)

This month is big for great new releases and next month should be just as good. Until then, write c/o *MRR* or agunderwood@gmail.com. Cheers!

i don't think that i need to sit here with you fucking dildos any more

by Imogen Binnie

You wake up Friday morning at 7 am, anxious and panicky and certain there's no way you'll feel okay enough to get out of bed today but thankful that at least, with the help of a wise decision to smoke some of the weed you are running out of before you went to sleep, you didn't wake up at 3 am last night, panicking and obsessing, the way you have most nights over the course of the last week or two.

Hardcore songs about panic attacks and paranoia have been making you mad because why the fuck would you turn this unbearable feeling into an anthemic singalong but also, you haven't been able to handle the more abrasive and bleak shit you usually listen to because that stuff just feels like fucking theater right now. You have one hundred million bad songs on your phone and you've been setting it to shuffle and the only things you can even stand to listen to are melodramatic '90s alternative rock radio staples that you try to sing along to but find yourself literally choking on tears instead.

This weekend is going to be longer than usual because you took Friday off weeks in advance so you could go down and do things you needed or wanted to do in Philadelphia and New York except you can't figure out how to make yourself eat food, much less leave the house. You're relieved, at least, that you have today off, because would you even have been able to handle five days of work in a row this week? And it's going to take at least three days to get your head together to figure out why, exactly, you have felt so fucked up for a week and a half. You know it started with some shitty stuff at work but you also know that your emotional response to shitty stuff at work has been so disproportionate that there must be something else going on and you're going to need time and space to figure it out but once you get out of bed and your girlfriend has made coffee and you're drinking it and choking down some toast or whatever the fuck you can get into your belly—which is hard because the literal physical muscles around your belly have been so clenched for so long that you know you must be hungry but you feel like you aren't, which is setting off a whole other fucked up thing you don't even have space for in this column involving words like "eating" and "disorder" and "relapse"—all you can bring yourself to do is to lay on the couch and read the entire series of Locke & Key comics on your phone. There is an urgency to the impulse to lose yourself in imaginary murder and magic and horror that you haven't really felt since junior high, when you would read every Lois Duncan, Alvin Schwartz, Stephen King, and (especially) Dean R. Koontz book you could find at the school library and then at the regular library. There was a point when you had read everything Dean R. Koontz had written. You even re-read a bunch of them. You used to need to read that shit, instead of going outside, until you passed out at night because if you turned out the light you were stuck in the dark with your thoughts and you wouldn't be able to sleep and that's the thing that makes you realize, now, today, the first day of this three day weekend, that hormones are a real thing.

You bail on New York and Philly.

Reading horror stories hasn't felt this urgent since you were a kid and you already knew that reading felt urgent around adolescence because being in your head in your own body was unbearable and reading was a way to get out. Your adolescence was the kind of adolescence that would probably have been less traumatic for a cis person but you are not, were not, and never will be a cis person. It's gross but the panic and the cosmic something-is-fucking-horrible feeling you have been feeling for a week and a half is actually pretty close to the way you used to feel when you were a kid and what you realize is that this is probably about hormones. You have been off hormones for two years and it has not even occurred to you, in a long time, that that has been fucking you up.

You kind of want to talk about it and you kind of don't, because you have been thinking a lot recently about the fact that you live in a culture where there is this blob—a Blob, like in that movie *The Blob*, which you have not seen—which can absorb anything, no matter how radical it is at its inception, absorb it, and then sell it back to you and to everyone else, defanged and innocuous, safe for consumption by white cis people with money. And this shit you are trying to survive, right now, which falls under the loose heading Trans Stuff? It has already been absorbed by the blob.

Trans women have been talking about our experiences in terms intended to make sense to cis people since at least 1952. But here is the thing: Trans Stuff doesn't make sense to cis people. It doesn't have to and in fact it fucking shouldn't. With a Blob splurping constantly at the door, trans people have been using bullshit metaphors to petition cis people for acceptance or pity for way longer than you've been alive and what that means is that you don't even know how to talk about hormones without sounding like you're biologically essentializing gender or creating hierarchies of trans legitimacy or perpetuating bullshit trans narratives. So with the Blob looming all you want to say about what hormones do and do not do is this concrete fact: you feel less fucked up when you are on hormones.

So you've gotten out of bed, right, it's like 10 am and you're reading horror comics on a phone with an urgency unparalleled in any other area of your life, thinking: something has to change. It's not just work. The problem is not your job and the problem is not your girlfriend (who rules, and who one day soon will read this in our bathroom. Hi Alex). The problem is these storm clouds which have been following you around for a couple years now, which you have been either unaware of or unable to acknowledge. Because hey, stupid: you have been off hormones two years. That is real. Hormones are a real thing. It's not a fucking surprise that everything seemed fine until now and it's also not a surprise that eventually it started to feel like everything was in a state of constant explosion. That's how this shit goes. You're fine and you're fine and you're fine until everything is unbearable.

This pattern, too, is old news.

One of the places where the Blob-Regurgitated Trans Narrative fails you is at the point labeled "I always knew," because you always kind of knew and also you always kind of didn't. Imagine that you have a clear memory of a specific day, fifteen years ago, after blogging all night, anonymously, obsessively, about gender, for literal years, when you realized: Oh. I am the kind of person who needs to transition in order to live a life. But it wasn't a revelation or an admission—it was somewhere in-between. You had known there was a really important thing that you needed to figure out and you had known that it had to do with gender but what you had also known was that you had learned from the culture that raised you that you couldn't possibly be the kind of person who needed to transition in order to live a life. All you knew about trans women was the things that idiots and jerks know about trans women: that we are jokes, that we aren't real people, that our lives aren't as valid as other people's lives. That stuff. Everybody knows those tropes.

The "I always knew" story might only make sense for cis people. For you, in this scenario, you didn't know how to know. You knew something but you had no tools to figure out what it was that you knew.

In other words: there were storm clouds there. The whole time. You just either didn't know they were there, or you didn't know they were storm clouds, or you didn't know they were headed for you, or else it didn't even occur to you to look at the sky.

These storm clouds? They are old stuff.

And your shitfuck-panic-somatic-hell-couch scenario right now is just a reboot of old stuff, too. This is how you survived until your late teens or early twenties: by not knowing that you felt all fucked up (at least, not until shit fucking exploded.) When you have no tools to figure out that you are the kind of person who needs to transition in order to have a life, you come up with a different set of tools that you can use to survive until you can find the actual tools that you need. And so surviving, for you, has meant going numb. It has meant learning not to trust any desire or even feeling that you might have, since you know you can't name or trust the central desire or feeling in your spine or your sacrum or wherever it is. It has meant never looking at the fucking sky. And when you spend your first couple decades of consciousness not trusting yourself to want anything beyond bullshit—records, guitar pedals, band t-shirts; easy, painless desires in the context of a capitalist blob—and you learn to do it automatically, that's not a survival skill that you can shed like skin.

No matter how much cis people like Blob stories about trans women that focus on Amazing Physical Transformations, human beings can't shed our skin. Or our guts. Or our histories.

Luckily you don't need to shed shit. You just need to get yourself back on hormones so your body can feel like someplace where you can live again.

Look. You and I both know this rain cloud metaphor sucks, but considering the fact that the English language has existed to serve the cis-supremacist capitalist colonialism Blob for centuries, someone might actually argue that you're a fucking genius and a heroine for coming up with a metaphor at all. Even a shitty one. But what I'm saying is this: you were on hormones for a long time. And for a while there you were in the habit of checking the forecast—or at least looking at the sky sometimes. But what you have to admit is that when you went off hormones, your body started to feel a lot like it used to, before you knew enough to pay attention, and that habit fell off. You fucked up and got rained on. But it's just rain. You'll live. You just need to pay attention.

So you go outside and you look.

The fuck.

Up.

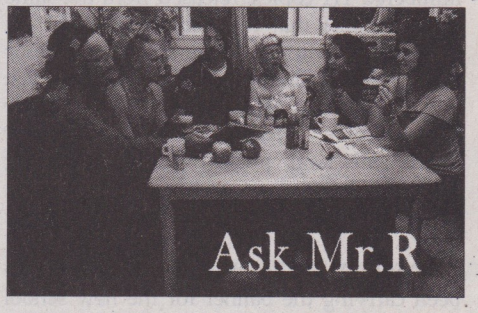
ENDNOTES:

1) Correspondences did some recording with Kelly from Stick Shift Recordings in Burlington recently and we might play some shows with Ragana in August and September.

2) Bog Oak is a band that rules if you like sludgy doomy metal.

3) I'm sure by the time you read this my shit will be sorted out and I'll be emotionally stable and living in a solid gold house, but I want to send out a big Fuck You to myself for feeling like I need to reassure you about it.

4) Next month: maybe something a little more Maximum Rocknroll and a little less Maximum Feelings? MAYBE.



I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, and we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion *column though. (..and if we need a tagline for that I hope it can be something as vague as: "A column for people who are intrigued by the subtle differences between the 'punks' and the 'punx'.") Text a question to 510-585-HELP (510-585-4357)! Apparently you can also call that number and leave a message like a weirdo. Send an email if you're living in the early 2000s, ASKMRR@MAIL.COM.*

Hey Mr.R,

I have limited money (big surprise) and the only way I get to shows is bumming a ride. I live an hour further from Pittsburgh (that's one punk city) than I used to so it's even harder to get to any of the abundance of shows I wanna see. How the hell do I decide what shows to go to!? And how do I cope with missing amazing bands?

Without having a little more information about you and your life to narrow it down, I could offer a million different possibilities that you may or may not be able to relate to, but at least one will, hopefully, match up to something resembling your punk lifestyle solution. Like if you are a teenager writing this question, your free time, ability to travel, and tolerance for punking is going to give you a very different set of options than when compared to the options of a thirty-plus year-old person with

fulltime work, family responsibilities, or a reputation for bumming rides that goes back a decade. Even when you want to be able to go to every show, you may not realistically have the ability to cure your FOMO.

"Limited money" is definitely a problem that everyone has but it really makes a difference what it's actually being limited *by*. If it's rent and bills and life draining all of your money and your time, you may try to rethink a budget that takes bills into account (Do you really need to pay for cable when the internet exists? Do you need to pay for the internet when the library exists?), but also takes into consideration some kind of budget of your happiness. Do not consider this if it leads you down an oogle-ish path or into becoming a deadbeat parent, but maybe you can occasionally think to yourself, "Work to Live, Don't Live to Work". Maybe you can have a midlife crisis and get more of a part-time job than a fulltime one and move into a smaller room at a cheaper house. Maybe you'll use the money and time that you save to hang out with friends more regularly (even if this means hanging out outside of shows more often than actually going inside of them, at least you'll be technically showing up more frequently).

If this isn't a problem for you and you already have more time than you know what to do with and your new city is simply a show desert, one way to choose your own adventure would be to become the person booking the cool Pittsburgh bands in your new town. You would be surprised how many bands would love to drive out of town to play a show somewhere different than the same bars or houses they always play. Just ask them! That might also be a good solution to the coping aspect of your question. Starting any number of new bands, zines, community gardens, or whatever other kinds of things punks are into like...bike kitchens...and screen printing workshops...is a way to feel connected and fill out a scene that doesn't have as much going on musically.

Dear Mr.R,

Like many other punks, I wear work drag five days a week so I can pass under the radar at my office job. I can't help but notice mainstream fashion periodically laps at the milky underbelly of punk fashion, most recently with infiltrations of "tastefully" studded heels and mini pyramids bedazzling shirts, jackets, and pants. I'd love to save money maintaining one wardrobe instead of two. Many Monday mornings I've put on the studded belt only to decide it's "too authentic," not subtle enough for "office punk." Am I being tricked by the hypothetical trickle-down fashion of three seasons from now? How do I toe the line between being seen as extremely fashion forward by my industry-minded coworkers, and spooking the locals?

—Working 999 to 5

Sometimes I worry about the mainstreaming of punk fashion in the same way that I might get mad if someone I hate likes the same band as me, or when I worry about whether Netflix will do justice to Jessica Jones's character when they adapt her from those *Alias* comics. Like, it shouldn't matter but for some reason it does? Because this world where squares wear delicate pyramid studded earrings is the same world in which punks sell delicate pyramid studded earrings to squares on Etsy for a crazy amount of money, so I should really just move on with my life, right? Sure they have some of our accessories and they feel as though they're being authentic, but the reason your studded belt isn't passing is probably because their stuff is really just as square as they are. Not that studded belts are representative of underground punk culture or anything anymore, but they don't seem like they fit into the office job aesthetic because it hasn't changed as much as it feels like it has. These days visible tattoos and colored hair at work fit into the business model of Casual Friday "cool" bosses who want you to call them by their first names while still managing to pay you as little as they possibly can. And maybe your work doesn't fit that extreme, but I'm just trying to say that the fashion forward outfits of your coworkers aren't really related to any kind of punk fashion at all, just everyday capitalism, and you don't need to lend your cool exterior for them to hip up the joint anymore than you already have. I know it seems easier or more affordable to have one wardrobe, but do you really want to have one watered down wardrobe that you wear all the time, or do you want to be able to differentiate your work and home life like a little kid escaping from school or church into their play clothes? Leave work, look dumb.

Text questions to 510-585-HELP. Send long opinionated emails to ASKMRR@MAIL.COM.

This column is maybe just going to be a list of some stuff that I think is cool or important right now. It's springtime and someone .I've been crushing on basically *forever* showed up in town out of the blue and wants to hang out with me most of the time she's here, and that is *awesome* obvs. But it means that I'm not really getting much work done, and that I haven't even thought about my column, which is due tomorrow. Tomorrow I'm really busy, so basically I have to write the whole thing in one sitting right now, or else just quit and be booted out of punk forever. So yeah, anyway, here's a list of some shit that I think is cool:

WEED TINCTURE

Listen, I am a Weed Amateur, which is weird because I used to be a Weed Pro. Or like, it isn't that weird because I haven't been a Weed Pro in over a decade. I think some people just get bad at weed when they get older. Anyway, I still like Doing Marijuana but smoking even one hit is too much for me now, so I like to make a really mellow weed tincture and dose myself super slowly like a baby.

It's really easy to make! First buy an eighth of decent weed. I don't know what all the different kinds of weed mean, so usually I just call the delivery service and say, "Give me the middle one" and that's what I buy. Then you grind the weed up very finely. You can use one of those weed grinders, but that's really tedious. I bet you can use a coffee grinder, but mine has coffee all over it. I just use a small food processor and it works great.

After you grind up the weed, put it in a mason jar and pour a pint of shitty high proof vodka over it, then close the jar, shake it around, and put it in a cabinet. Then, every time you open that cabinet, shake it up again. Eventually it starts turning greenish yellow. Then you should dip in a tincture dropper and taste it. If it's delicious and makes you feel awesome, then it's done. You strain it through a cheesecloth, and that's that. And if it doesn't taste good and make you feel great, then just put it back in the cupboard for another week. It's that easy!

Also, since the "sobriety" I practice is a variation on what my friend Max calls Poppers Edge, and my rule is that I'm only allowed to do drugs that come in tiny bottles, this gives me a third thing besides Rush Liquid Incense and 5 Hour Energy. And everyone knows it's important to have a third thing.

THE BEST SHOW

Do you listen to the *Best Show* yet? Why not? The *Best Show* is this radio thing that used to happen on WFMU but now Tom Scharpling, the host, has built his own radio station in a secret location in New Jersey and broadcasts over the internet at thebestshow.net every Tuesday night from 9-12. Heavily DIY, this dude is a true underdog and should be championed by all punx worldwide because he's basically the awesomest person and his radio show is so cool. It's a freeform call-in show, and has the potential to get super weird in ways that I love.

I don't think Tom would characterize himself as a punk, but he is definitely Punk Adjacent and even if he wasn't, he's super funny, has great politics, and is really charming. The show's been on for fourteen years or something at this point, so there's a huge back catalog. If you're daunted and looking for a place to start, I suggest listening to "The Order of Everything" from the *Best Show Gems* podcast.

MY FRIEND MEREDITH GRAVES

Recently there was a situation apropos of the

hypothetical I wrote about in last month's column. Meredith was put in a position to do an easy, passive thing that would tacitly benefit an abusive man, or to make a more difficult choice that would require work and maybe even some conflict. The latter was requested by a survivor of violence at the hands of that abusive man. Meredith unflinchingly and unhesitatingly chose the latter. Even though that's how everyone should act, it's actually so rare these days that someone puts their money where their mouth is. I think her awesomeness deserves to be recognized and I want her to know that she's appreciated.

MIERLE LADERMAN UKELES

Mierle Laderman Ukeles is this kind of obscure feminist performance artist from the '70s that I only know about because Out of Town Dream Babe is here researching her work, so we've been talking about her nonstop the past few days. She's the Artist In Residence at the New York City Dept. of Sanitation, a position she invented for herself 40 years ago. Her work is all grounded in this seriously awesome political agenda and she's also really funny, which I think is super important in art. I suggest reading about her on your own, (especially because a bunch of the scholarship about her that exists today is in garbageman trade publications and it's cool to have a reason to read those), but something I really like is that a ton of her art addresses the question posed by smug dickheads "Yeah, well after your *revolution* who's gonna take out the trash?" Like, she was basically championing shitworkers worldwide for a majority of her career and all punks everywhere should be able to respect that.

SARAH MCCARRY'S
METAMORPHOSES TRILOGY

Okay, Sarah McCarry is my friend. So let's get that out of the way, it's not like I'm not biased here. But the reason she's my friend is because I read the first novel in her *Metamorphoses Trilogy* and it was so beautiful and perfect that I wrote her a letter and was like "Hey I really like your book," and she was like, "Woah, really? I like your zines," and then we went and got Ethiopian food and walked around for a few hours and were like, "Okay, cool, we're friends now."

So anyway, these books are all retellings/reinterpretations of Greek myths, which I always think are great. And they're set among three generations of women in a fictionalized version of Kurt Cobain's family, which I also think rules, because like, it's long been time coming that we acknowledge that Kurt Cobain was a true queerdo and his presence in popular culture was instrumental for a lot of us turning out cool. And what's doubly rad is that for Sarah, he's just the background, and the real interesting shit is about the emotional growth and interiority of women and girls. And there's like, just enough non-judgmental drug use and gay sex to make me feel like no school would ever let a kid read these books on purpose, but some teenagers might find them and like, maybe they'll be okay after all or whatever. I think creating beautiful art to help weird fucked-up teens survive is a super important task.

OKAY I THINK THAT'S IT

I mean, it's not it for things I think are cool. I definitely think a bunch of other stuff is cool, (wearing jumpsuits, painting my nails metallic colors, the Mukilteo Fairies *Special Rites* 7") but that's it for my attention span for this column, and plus I have to go to work anyway.

One correction from a few columns back: I said the band Altaralta had broken up, but that's not true. They just live across the country from each other. Since when has geography impeded punk? I still have no idea how you can get their awesome tape though.

As usual you should write to sliceharvester@gmail.com or Colin Atrophy / 442-D Lorimer St #230 / Brooklyn, NY 11206 if you wanna tell me about something you think is cool, or even something you think sucks, but you think I'd think is cool. Or even something you think I'd think sucks, if it sucks in a way that's actually kind of gratifying.

Fuck Billy Joel. Fuck your negative attitude. We. Are. The Punks.

Lame is Punk
by Neve Be

A love affair with a town is a funny thing. For me, it has historically depended very little on my real-life, real-time experiences there, but very much to do with a musical montage loop of clips of my life—not just my life, lives something like my life, lives I have heard of! Which took place in that place. Maybe love affair is the wrong word, for it does not have to be deep, or long, and has happened for me in every place I have lived, and I have lived many places, briefly, partially, and simultaneously. But like any good proponent of the spectrum of non-monogamy, it can still be love, and a home. City crushes. For aren't crushes also a kind of little love? Worthy of a song? I have songs for every borough of New York, for Austin, for Detroit, for Chicago, Portland, Maine and Portland, Oregon, Tucson, Dallas, St. Petersburg, Florida, Philadelphia, Easton, Oakland, Berkeley, San Francisco, Olympia, Seattle, and even Clinton, New Jersey. Others too. Places I haven't been. Rome? Paris? Rio de Janeiro? Havana? Khartoum? Vienna? Barcelona? Each one was created in a moment when the place spoke to me, told me to come or told me to stay, said, this is what your life could look like. But how true is that, usually? That your life will feel just like this song feels? A lived life is thick and thorny, even counting the good times, and city or town living only exacerbates that.

I have often relied on psychic information to tell me that I am home. Unfortunately, one message from the ether can't really cut it. You need to hear it repeated at different levels and tones, in different contexts, for different reasons, but in the same place. *This* is why this place is your home. And *this*. And *this*. There had always been a lot of signals I had been looking for. They involved romance and loud live shows in the basement or the park and sooo much whiskey, so much wine. They also often involved flights of stairs and bone numbing winters and drama and dependence. For all the poems I have about New York, for instance, I cannot think of one time that staying there made me feel affirmed in the body I truly had. In New Orleans it was the Bywater, outside of the John. Where I have celebrated many birthdays amidst jukebox rock and toilets. The cobblestone suddenly looked like it would spill out forever beneath my wheels and feet, smelling like summer in February and sunset at most times of day. I remember telling my friend Spark, "The ground feels familiar here. And that's a good sign." They wanted me to stay, and also knew why it was complicated. And as much as they wanted people they loved to stay, they also didn't want to encourage, necessarily, more young transplants to move to New Orleans. We would lie in bed facing each other, in the squat they were building into what truly looked like a home, and they asked me how I felt about moving to the Bay in the summer, which had been the plan for a long time, before I found myself in New Orleans, as I usually found myself places after diving into the pure bliss of *getting in the car and going there*.

"I want to go," I said, "but I'm afraid. What if it's perfect, and then I don't need to go anywhere else?" I had already test-driven living in Berkeley and before that Oakland, and found it to be the most shockingly accessible experience of my young raised-on-the-East-Coast life. What if it's the only place that disabled people could comfortably and accessibly live and then that's just it for me? I wanted to stay in the in-between, difficult places where the road ribboned out for me and melted like candy. Where everything was murky and beautiful, like here was the river herself, wide and resilient and brown like ancestors I haven't gotten to meet.

For the first couple of weeks of being in New Orleans, everything in my system rebelled. I broke out in stress hives every day. I felt like I was drowning. Psychically, New Orleans is intense. As is her right to be. And I felt extremely open, susceptible. It made me defensive. After learning, over the phone, that

my father had cancer, had perhaps had cancer for a long time, and was experiencing acute renal failure, I transitioned from the hy-fy state I had been operating in, to the most depressed I had been in a long time, lying on a mattress reading *The Hunger Games* while the rain came down every day, waiting for my friend to get off work and pick me up to go get drunk every night, either at a bar or a fire or lightless squat. What made so many nights feel worth it were how many relatively accessible shows there were, in unregistered, flat concrete spaces, often outside. Generator shows became my new favorite thing. And they are a flexible, portable, versatile idea.

New Orleans is supportive of extreme states. Extreme reveling and extreme wallowing, especially. One night, looking out at the pinked dark sky, a hot breeze moved on my ear and I heard the city's voice for the first time. I can't tell you what she said but I got it, what I hadn't before. What I had felt so challenged by seemed also like an opportunity. My attitude towards inaccessibility used to be so adventurous. I used to be brave. I wanted so much. I wanted to have a chance at what everyone else I knew was taking a chance at. If my friends can live in terrible fifth-floor apartments in Bushwick and be beautiful, nasty, sad artists, or ruin their lungs reconstructing squatted living spaces near the bayou, or hop on trains not meant for carrying humans, or made whatever difficult place in their hearts and bodies they were living in liveable then I wanted to too! I wanted to struggle! I wanted to find hope. On the phone, my mother asked why I wanted to keep living in such inaccessible places. The place I was currently staying was only accessed via an outdoor metal staircase. I argued with her that I could always count on my friends. But I never lived anywhere other than home and school for longer than three months. Before I counted on my friends I counted on my mom.

What was the alternative? I grew up in an inaccessible, third floor apartment, would return to it after every school break and failed adventure, and now, would be returning there again.

My mom didn't know how much time my dad had and she asked me to come home. I didn't yet have ease in flying alone so, heroically, she flew all the way down to Louisiana just to fly back up with me, stayed on the punk mattress we kept in the living room, met all of my friends at multiple "mom dinners" we threw for her and other moms who happened to be visiting at the same time. Together we returned to New Jersey, to the small town I grew up in. A place I had always found hard to romanticize, filled mostly with moderate to conservative white people and tiny picturesque shops, but since it had been the palate of all of my creative endeavors and punk adventures with my friends prior to adulthood, maybe it was beautiful. There is a river there too. Green. Loud. Filled with ducks. A little yellow bridge leads into town. I got dirty in that town and I had sex in that town and cried in that town and created complex, loving relationships. I was the only mixed race person I knew, and one of a couple of visibly disabled people at my 1900 person school.

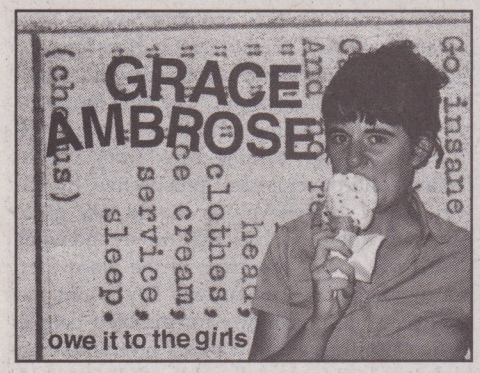
My father's recovery coincided with my surgery rather nicely (he is now quite vibrant and in good spirits). It was entirely unclear whether I had come to New Jersey to be of comfort to him or whether I had decided to have my surgery in New Jersey so that he could be of comfort to me. I didn't think there was anything left for me there. And yet, the funny thing about a place that was your home for most of your life through no choice of your own, is that even with the trauma felt, it remembers your language. It knows how to reach your senses. Fuck—that smell! That light. It knows how to be the only home you ever knew, before you began the rough, rocky journey of finding and making your own. As I grappled with rage and anguish and pain and confusion and creepy soaked bandages and living in my mother's house again and interacting with my father's infuriating optimism, my old friends and some of my friend's ex-boyfriends who were now my friends came out of woodwork to support me. And I felt moved by how life might be possible once again in the place I had left. The nights were very beautiful. Nothing beats stars over dark water. And spring looks good on everybody. I repeated the pattern of New Orleans, a mysterious almost home, in Clinton, New Jersey, the oldest home: distracting media by day (*Twin Peaks* and blogging), and going out to bars and the river and weird art parties by night. I am so grateful to my parents for letting me choose them all over again, to my old friends for being so gorgeous and worthwhile after I had gone away and met so many queer, radical, shiny new friends to choose. I am so grateful to every person who has ever picked my eager and weary body up in a car, and to the people who do it now, and those who will in the future. One day I'll drive.

When the time was right I did move to the Bay. I am so glad I did. If I hadn't, I probably would not have figured out what being a queer, disabled, radical of color with dreams of family and self-determination while still maintaining my ideals as an anarchist, punk, and communitarian might look like! If I hadn't I would never have met my partner, and people in Seattle who are opening their arms to me to become my next home next year.

Different homes serve different purposes at different times. Like lovers, like friends, like family, no one place or person can hold you in quite the same way. So I will never dismiss the places that let me be an emotional, unemployed, disabled, houseless, drunk punk. I will never dismiss the cars, and the mattresses, and the couches, and the awkwardly shared rooms. New Orleans, I still have a crush on you. New York, you still make me mad like any dramatic ex, and I still love you! I believe if a place tells you you are home, you are, but even with that, there are other needs to evaluate. You can love a place that holds you but isn't perfect for you. And the next questions can be, how does this place love and support me? For how long will it? What other desires and needs would I like to explore? I am coming here, from a low-income, anti-development perspective, by the way. And I do believe one should take great care with where and how they move, and what their body might represent in the place they are moving into. And no, the Bay is not the only place in the country for disabled people to live and thrive, but it sets a pretty fucking high standard for how liveable our lives could feel.

Inaccessibility shout-outs: *Streetlight Records* in San Francisco has all of their music upstairs and their DVDs downstairs. I think that it might make sense to either downsize on DVDs, mix it up with music and DVDs downstairs, or put all the music downstairs. *1-2-3-4 Go!* Records is a ground floor operation which is pretty small but still manages to host great shows. All the literature lives in a magazine rack on a raised platform. Either ramp the platform or move the magazines. The guy I spoke to seemed to get it, but I'm not sure if it will change. And finally, I don't expect you to give a shit about the *Sleep Country Amphitheater*, but I could not resist the combination of Courtney Love and Lana del Rey, so sue me, take away my punk points, whatever. But it was there that I observed a phenomena I will probably continue to bring up. False advertising of accessible bathrooms. Now, all advertising is false, but false advertising about access is just as low as it gets. Do not mark a bathroom with the white and blue signal of my people, if a wheelchair using person would not be able to shut the door behind them once inside. Depth is just as important as width. Ahhhhh. I have sat sidesaddle on so many toilets and it's not a choice. I'm not trying to feet flirt with the person next door.

Accessibility shout-outs: I didn't get out to any show spaces I haven't been before this month, I was on the road and busy editing a bunch, but I did go to another fucking awesome show at *Repair Revolution* in Seattle. The bathroom is not technically big enough to be accessible but if they moved the garbage can or got a smaller one it would help a lot. A chair can totally fit through the door. I saw Zone Out and Diversions again, and they were even better than last time! My Parade ended the night and it's hard not to love Mo on a mic. I love talented frontqueers! Another space I use frequently that deserves a shout-out is *Ed Roberts Campus* above Ashby Bart, which houses tons of amazing services for people with disabilities, The World Institute on Disability, and I also kind of pretend it is my office. Final shout-out forever goes to my family and my family of friends, for figuring it out with this disabled punk, and constantly redefining disability and access!



"I can't afford a salad
I can't afford no greens
Can't afford popcorn shrimp
So tell me what that means"
—"I'm Broke," Violence Creeps

It's the aftermath of Pride weekend here in San Francisco. The rainbow covered pop-up Airbnb stand that was erected outside of the compound has been dismantled (unfortunately, not forcibly by yours truly) and it's back to business as usual. Since I last wrote, the 97 cent store up the road has been replaced by a baffling boutique, replete with fake fireplace and fake bottles of champagne over fake ice in whatever the fuck you call those pewter things that hold bottles of champagne, probably made out of fake pewter. They used a GoFundMe to start their store. I went in with my friend Anna the other day and we couldn't figure it out—is their entire business based on selling three tiny pairs of jeans? I don't think I've ever been as visibly confused by a store before, but don't worry, they wouldn't talk to us to help us figure it out.

It's easy to get down on San Francisco when you are a brokeass punk. Talking to Flesh World last month (did you read the interview in the last issue of the magazine?!) put it into perspective for me a little bit, though. Sure, if your idea of fun is narrowly confined to seeing a punk show every night, maybe this city is not for you. (RIP shows at Thrillhouse, Mission Records, Casa Sanchez, etc etc etc etc, anywhere with a basement that isn't a bar.) But this month I saw Lawrence Jordan films on 16mm—including one that was an astonishing collaboration with Jess, a San Franciscan weirdo of the highest order—presented by Black Hole Cinematheque. (Tooth is a national treasure.) The night before I saw the new documentary about the Process Church at the city's oldest continuously operating theatre. I saw *Out of the Blue* at the Castro and a seventy-one-year-old male stripper at a talent show at the Makeout Room. My high-brow activity for the month was the Kronos Quartet playing Terry Riley compositions in celebration of his 80th birthday. (Two nights in a row! The sonic possibilities of string instruments! So wild!) I missed Denise Gallant's video synthesizer at Oddball (still kicking myself!), but I got to hear Martin Sorrondeguy and Don Pyle in conversation about queer performativity in punk ("I think they gay it up for me" — MS), watch *She Said Boom* (the Fifth Column documentary, long live GB Jones!), and remember Toronto artist and activist Will Munro. And who could forget Stuffed Queens, the new queer punk night hosted by Scott Moore of Limp Wrist, the highlight of which was Phatima Rude stapling dollar bills to her head to a soundtrack provided by Suicidal Tendencies' "Institutionalized." And Layla and I got to play girl punk freak records to kick that evening off! I did all that, ate hella $2 tacos and still managed to play music with my dumb punk band, see a bunch of killer shows, and put this magazine together. There is still a vibrant freak underground here (*Maximum* included!) and it's up to us to nourish it through these times of crisis. Don't let anyone tell you that San Francisco is nothing more than a mecca for fancy toast. They're wrong!

The freak underground has to document itself—can't trust rock critics to do it for us! We're embarking on a book project here at *Maximum*, looking at the first two decades of this magazine's existence. Martin has been doing crazy research for it, tracking down old shitworkers and contributors, getting copies of flyers, letters, ephemera. He found an archive in Southern California which has recordings of many of the old *MRR* radios and we're in the process of transcribing interviews that were on air, candid conversations with lots of classic bands and some surprising ones! The book is gonna be incredible. Seriously. The shit we have here will blow your mind. No firm timeline for it yet, but it's coming. It has to come! In a lot of ways, it's crazy that *MRR* hasn't published a book from our archives yet—lots of other zines have big tomes about them. The difference between them and us though is that we never stopped making this thing! And don't plan to anytime soon. It's hard to squeeze production of a major publication in on top of the monthly print cycle, but we're gonna do it. If you have any *MRR* ephemera tucked away in your attic that you think we might be interested in, get in touch. We wanna see it. Send hi-res scans or originals—we'll return them!

I'm writing this column at the very last possible second, later than I've ever done it. It's 10:33 am and I gotta be on BART to the record store in less than half an hour. Doing the magazine by myself is far from impossible (and in some ways, I kinda like it!) but it sure would be more fun with a partner in crime. Get in touch for an application.

Send hate mail, notes of encouragement, and OG copies of Legal Weapon's Death of Innocence *to grace@maximumrocknroll.com or PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146.*

ENDNOTES:

1) I finally got a copy of the Kleenex/LiLiPUT book that the band made back in the '80s! Thanks to Brett from M'Ladys for hooking it up. A new excuse to learn German. It's incredible! It basically documents everything you could ever hope to read about the band—clippings from fanzines and newspapers, lyrics, etc. So good! He might still be able to track down a copy for you if you are persistent enough. Something like five were available via mailorder and via Instagram it feels like I know every single other person who also bought it.

2) Do you already read German and live in the United States? Do you want to start reviewing German-language zines for us? Get in touch. "It looks cool but I can't read it" is getting old…We'll mail 'em to you.

3) Violence Creeps is the greatest band in the Bay Area. Amber is like a young Rollins, her male backing band does an admirable job keeping up, and their songs are indelible anthems for disaffected brokeass punks like myself. Flexi out now, 7" is done but mysteriously unavailable, but I'm sure all will become clear with time. I'll need another copy to replace the one I am in the process of wearing out. Keep your eyes peeled. I'm an unabashed superfan of this group, join up!

4) I'm coming to Olympia for the hardcore fest. Can I sleep on your floor? Will it be hot there? Can I go swimming somewhere?

5) I'm coming to Minneapolis to visit my brother, conveniently timed for the weekend of the Lumpy and the Dumpers/Ivy gig. Psyched! Minneapolis punks, come find me and say what's up. Hoping Extreme Noise has some scores wating for me.

6) We are still looking for some columnists who wanna write about hardcore (xHxCx) and being record collector scumbags. Get in touch.

7) Can't decide if *Killed By Death* #2 or #5 is my favorite. #2 is endless bangers but #5 is for the freaks! Luckily listening to them counts as working in this house.

8) Rest in power Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd, Susie Jackson, Ethel Lee Lance, Depayne Middleton-Doctor, Clementa C. Pinckney, Tywanza Sanders, Daniel Simmons, Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, and Myra Thompson.

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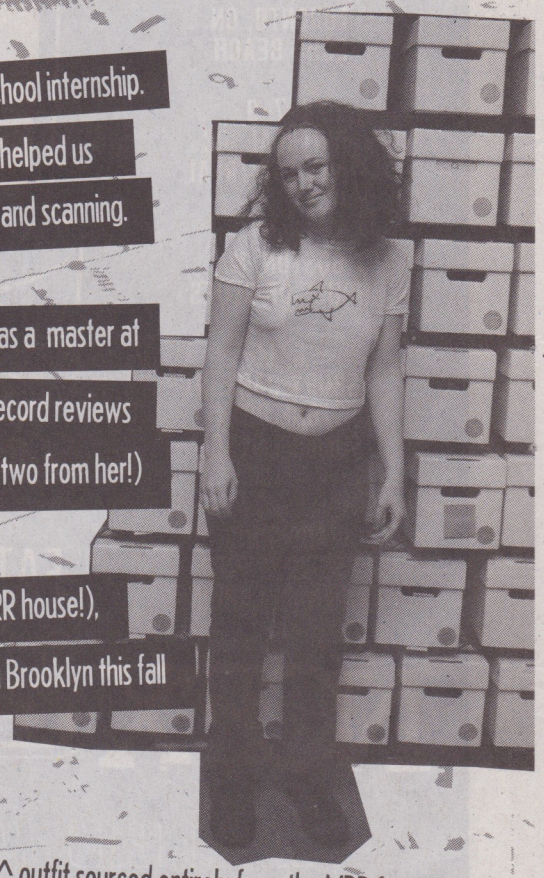
SHITWORKER OF THE MONTH:

MIMI!

Mimi started doing shitwork last fall, as part of her high school internship. She ended up sticking around for the entire year and helped us stay on top of green-taping, filing, shipments, and scanning.

She also helped edit the zines section and was a master at formatting all of the addresses for the record reviews (ahem, reviewers, you could learn a thing or two from her!)

A San Francisco native (her mom lived at the old MRR house!), she taught us lots about the city -- she's off to college in Brooklyn this fall and we miss her already!



^^ outfit sourced entirely from the MRR free bin! ^^

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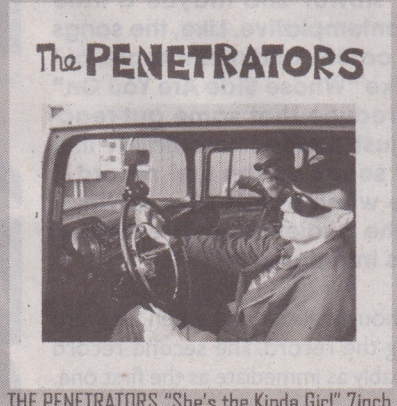

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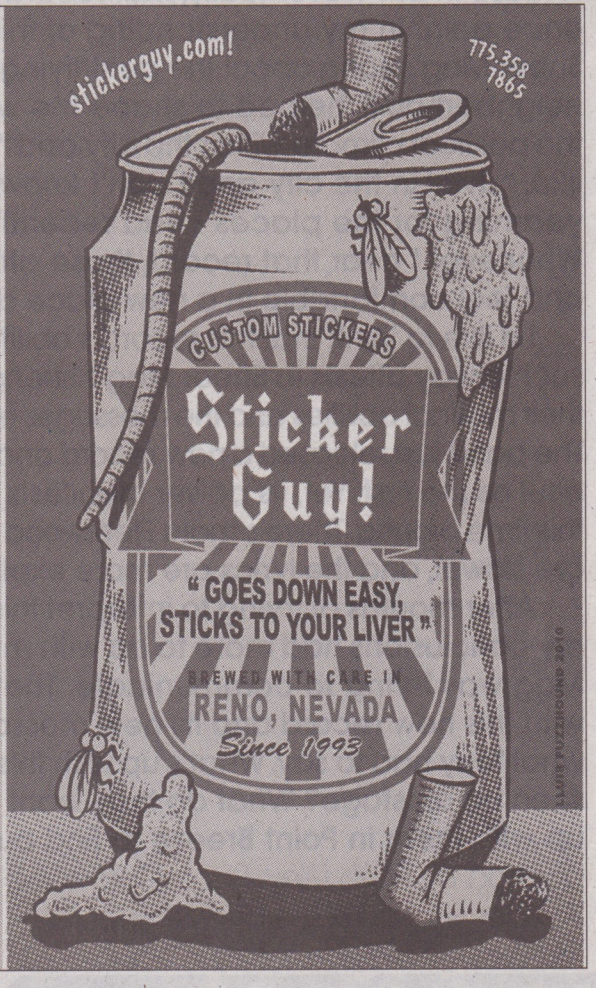


Music remains most powerful in memory. While the initial moment of hearing a song is an important one, a band's ability to frame a period in a person's life doesn't really resonate until that song is revisited months later and the moments of a particular place and time come rushing back to one's consciousness. At that point, a song becomes more than a song, but rather a way of examining the past. Maybe it's then that a song's message becomes most clear?

Sheer Mag was one of the first bands I saw in Philadelphia, a city that I knew little about upon moving here last August. I probably listened to their first record more than any other release in 2014. Eventually, that record became a key reference point in my understanding of this city. "Point Breeze," Sheer Mag's song about the gentrifying state of a South Philly neighborhood, helped to shape the way that I understood the political climate within the city and "Sit and Cry," with lines like, "Livin' in the city and I don't know why," embodied my yearning for the places I had recently left to live in Philly. Whenever I hear that record, those attempts to understand and feel comfortable in a new place are there again.

I'd like to think that this record's ability to affect a person in such a way attests to Sheer Mag's strength as a band, both in their musical abilities and the messages embodied in the songs. The band just released a new record and I think it's just as powerful as the first. Yet, its power manifests itself in different ways this time around. There's more Fleetwood Mac riffage, the songs are slower, and the lyrics are more explicitly political.

After months of trying to interpret this band, I realized that my conclusions had more to do with myself than what Sheer Mag was trying to communicate. That's probably fine, but with this new record and its new messages, I wanted to see what they had to say. What's up with this band beyond what's seen up on stage? What do they want us to know? I caught up with them in Point Breeze to find out. Interview and introduction by Keith Riley. Photos provided by Emily Burtner and Xander Fischer. Logo by Kyle Seely.

MRR: I know everyone loves fun ice-breaker questions, so let's start with one. Tell me who you are, what you play in the band, and then, since the band just went on a US tour, what was the most memorable drive of the trip? It could be something beautiful like driving through a National Park or something dystopian, like getting stuck in traffic in Los Angeles.

Matt: Well, I'm Matt Palmer. I play guitar and I'd probably say the most memorable one was through the Canadian Rockies because it was very pretty. Yeah, it was beautiful and it took a really long time. And, they're huge!

Hart: I'm Hart. I play bass guitar and my ride was, well I think it was, the sand dunes on the way to San Diego, somewhere in California.

Christina: My name's Christina and I sing. My favorite drive was our last drive of tour when we were horsin' around, a lot! And stabbing each other with plastic bottles and throwing stuff at each other's faces. Matt was driving and he was getting very upset, like a father. That was my favorite drive! It was really funny and we were fighting a lot, but in a fun way. It was good, because it was like a road trip with your parents or something where you're pissing off everyone in the front seat.

Kyle: I'm Kyle. I play guitar. My favorite drive was the one from Atlanta to New Orleans where we drove all night long. I was at the wheel in the early morning, driving through the swamps, and it was real sick. A misty southern morning, it was great.

Allen: I'm Allen. I play drums. My favorite drive was definitely driving through the desert. It was the first time I'd ever seen the desert. It just kind of happened and I realized it was the furthest I'd ever been able to see without anything interrupting my vision. The Canadian Rockies were a close second though.

MRR: One thing I noticed about the second record compared to the first one is that some of the songs are slightly slower and maybe a little more contemplative. Like, the songs are still catchy and memorable, but songs like "Whose Side Are You On" don't produce that same gut-reaction to just dance immediately like a lot of songs on the first record. I feel like when bands slow down, it forces the audience to listen more. Was this intentional?

Matt: I thought about that when we were recording the record. The second record isn't probably as immediate as the first one.

The first record was basically like, four singles and the second record is…well, it's not album oriented because it's still an EP. But, yeah, I agree it's more contemplative. We wanted to establish that we weren't like a one-off, flash in the pan type of band and basically show a different side. I mean, we're still trying to figure out all the different things that we can do. The first record is great and I like that it's so immediately catchy, but this one is probably more thoughtfully constructed lyrically, I'd say.

Hart: I don't know if it was really intentional from the get-go with the tempo thing because we always fuck around with our tempos. It's on tape and I have, like a knob where I can do it. But, yeah, it's all a process of figuring out what we think sounds the best.

Kyle: I think now I've started thinking more about albums, more LP structure. So some of them are less hit-pocket and more of like, a deep-cut, maybe. But I think it also just kind of happened accidentally too. Like, "Whose Side Are You On" turned out a little more morose and brooding than I thought it would. A lot of times, they just change during the recording process. You never know what you're gonna get, even when you're working on the songs.

Hart: I mean, "Fan the Flames" was tracked at like, half the speed it is now. So it would have been an extremely different song.

Christina: I think with the lyrics, we were like, "Well, everyone's listening, so we should try and say something." So we tried to do that.

MRR: What do you want the audience to get out of this new record that the first record wasn't offering?

Matt: I think the first record was kind of a creation myth or something. I thought about that, specifically when I was writing "Hard Lovin'." That song is sort of about, like building Christina up as an icon. It's full of tall tales. There's shit in there like, "I can see in the dark" and "I can breathe underwater." It sort of tells how she grew up on Long Island. "I came in from the water," which is a reference to the sound, the Long Island Sound. "Livin' in the city and now I'm goin' insane."

The first record is kind of introductory. Like, "What You Want" is probably the most purely romantic song we've ever written. That's just like, a classic pop song. I was really into writing love songs at that time, and then this record is definitely a lot more political. We talked about landlords and gentrification in "Point Breeze" on the first record, and then "Fan the Flames" is basically all about that. It's al-

«WELL, EVERYONE'S LISTENING, SO WE SHOULD TRY AND SAY SOMETHING.»

so about living in Point Breeze, dealing with all the shit that's gone on in this house, all the shit the landlord's never fixed, the fire that happened next door because of the faulty wiring. "Our neighbors burned because of telephone cords," that's what that line alludes to. The houses on both sides of us have been flipped since we moved in. "Button Up" is about disdain for work and what you have to do to be able to work. You know, maintaining appearances and stuff like that. "Whose Side Are You On" is about the protests we went to for Ferguson. It's sort of like, a call to arms.

Hart: Yeah, the Black Lives Matter movement. It's about Americans of my generation and younger rediscovering how to protest and trying to figure it out. It's kind of a solidarity song.

MRR: Do you think those types of messages are communicated when you're performing? Or, do you think people are just there to have a good time?

Hart: I don't know if they are at all because we don't really say anything.

Christina: Sometimes. I think that when it seems like people aren't that into stuff, I've talked to them after and they've been like, "Yeah, I just like, stopped and listened instead of going crazy." I think more people are trying to listen.

Matt: I like that it's catchy and stuff and that people can hum the melody, and then, if you want to dig deeper, you can find out that there's a lot more going on. But, I like that there's both stuff going on.

Kyle: I think that some of the messages from this new 7" are still setting in. I think that the song "Point Breeze" has sort of a similar message to "Fan the Flames" and I see people really into that one. It's always hard to say during the first couple months after a 7" comes out and people don't know all the words and stuff like that. We shall see.

MRR: From an audience perspective, one thing I've always noticed about the band is that everyone is really good at what they're doing and adding something to the overall sound that seems really important. But, at the same time, it doesn't seem like anyone is showing off too much or pulling all the weight. It seems very collective. How did it get to that point?

Kyle: I think when we were coming up with the sound it never was a priority to be an insanely technical band. I play guitar parts that are sort of technical, but any total guitar nerd could play them. I want the infectious nature of the music to be more impressive, more so than the musicianship. A lot of the parts, if you separate them, they're really not that complicated. Between Hart's bass and my guitar, we work out a lot of weirder, syncopated parts where basically, I'll write a part and we'll split it up between the bass and the guitar. Like, I'll play the first half of the riff and Hart will finish it.

Allen: I've never been impressed by live bands where everyone just like, solos over each other. It's kind of people just grabbing for attention. All the drum parts for Sheer Mag are so simple. You know, there's not even really any drum fills. It's cool to play like that. At least for me, it takes the ego out of it. I'd rather worry about what it immediately sounds like live and nailing that. The thought of what people think about what I'm doing never even enters my head. I think that's good. I don't think you should look at music as a "look what I can do" type thing. I feel like it's always a better performance when bands just get up there, not even really say a word, rip through the set really tight, and peace.

Matt: I like the idea of not having much of an ego on stage, just kind of a "what's best for the sound" type of thing. We practice a lot and it's very important for us to be really tight. It's all almost muscle memory. I enjoy listening to the sound and I have the most fun at shows when I think we sound really good and really tight. Everyone's just trying to serve the greater good of the sound.

MRR: I wonder how important the environment of where the songs are being written and performed is to the sound. A lot of articles I've read about Sheer Mag have focused on how most of y'all met at a college in Upstate New York, but I feel like what's more important is that everyone ended up in Philadelphia. This city definitely has the potential to impact people in different ways. Is Sheer Mag a Philly band?

Kyle: I feel weird about answering that. I'm not from Philly and I haven't lived here very long. I don't want to claim to be anything that we're not. Because, I'm not a Philly guy. I moved here with very specific reasons, like it was cheap, I had friends here, bands were cool and stuff. But, I don't want to take more credit for being an ambassador of Philly than I deserve.

Matt: It seems a lot of people that I meet in this city are not from Philly. I mean, Philadelphia has definitely informed the sound, or at least the lyrics, in a very direct way.

Christina: I've lived here six years and if I had lived in New York? What the fuck, I don't know. I just feel like things are a lot more real and raw, and like, dirty here.

Allen: All of our rent is pretty inexpensive, so we can get away with having a lot of free time to play shows. And, New York, DC, and Baltimore are right there. I was the only one that didn't go to the college and I essentially met everyone by moving here. I mean, obviously we're a Philly band because we're a band in Philadelphia. I don't know if I could see myself living anywhere else.

MRR: Let's keep talking about Philadelphia. My favorite Sheer Mag song is "Point Breeze," not just because it's a good song musically, but I think it offers a really interesting perspective on what's happening in this city right now, and what's going on in cities across the country, really. My impression of what you're singing about, Christina, is that there's this person in this new urban environment and they feel really conflicted about how the neighborhood is changing. They're trying to evaluate their place in this process or something. Basically, what I like about the song is that it's not really passing judgment on anyone, except maybe real estate developers. It's just asking questions, not offering a solution or a response. I feel like that's really indicative of how a lot of people in cities are feeling about gentrification right now. Like, it's obvious that the process is fucked up, but the forces behind it, driving it all, are so huge and out of the average person's control that it's hard to know how to combat it in a meaningful way.

Christina: It's definitely kind of a thing, you know? Obviously, poor college students move to cheap places and then from there, this whole thing happens that none of them necessarily want. But, you know, then other white people feel safe there. It's fucking shitty, but it's hard to know what to do. We just want somewhere to be and to live, but it's causing all these other repercussions that we can't necessarily control.

Matt: I'm glad that you picked up on the questioning thing, because arguably we are gentrifying this neighborhood.

Hart: Yeah, I mean, we're not from here, so we can't necessarily pass judgment in the same way that someone from the neighborhood could, you know?

Matt: Point Breeze is definitely a historically black neighborhood that we moved to because, at the time, it was the only place we could get that had seven bed-

rooms. But, we didn't buy a house that was flipped or anything, like this place hasn't been renovated. But, like Christina said, the cultural cachet of being a young, white artist in a black neighborhood, we are contributing to that. But, also, like the conflict. Should we have just moved to a white neighborhood then? I don't know. We're just posing the question.

MRR: Yeah, it doesn't seem like you can avoid contributing to racism by living in the suburbs or a white, urban neighborhood. Those places exist because of racism, right?

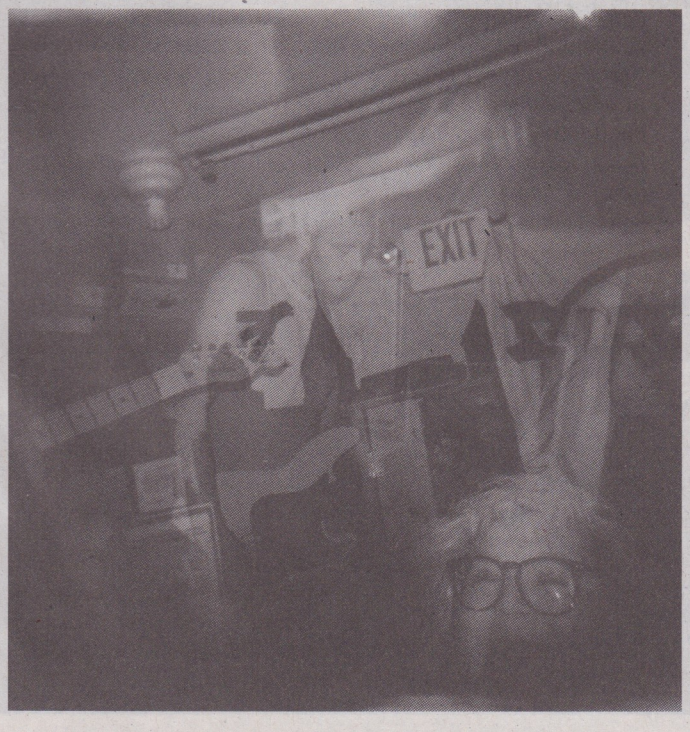
Hart: You can't avoid any of it.
Matt: It's the opposite of white flight. It's just like, the suburbs were nice, but now, everyone's realized that they want to live in the city again.
Allen: And, then the people from the city are getting pushed into the suburbs, where they don't want to be and they can't get what they need. Around here, I've lived in the same house the whole time that I've lived in Philadelphia. Things are definitely visibly different in Point Breeze. There aren't really businesses opening up that would attract people to move here, but if you just walk down Dickinson Street, you'll see a fuckin' block that looks like there isn't even anyone that lives on it. But the next block, it's fuckin' three story houses that got built last month that they're selling for three million dollars a piece. It looks like the neighborhood is rejecting those places because it's true. Nobody that lives here and owns property here wants those houses because they know that their house is gonna get turned into that one day. On my block, all of my immediate neighbors are all amazing people and they've lived in their houses for decades and decades and never intended on leaving, but now, they're facing the reality that it might happen. And, it's not like it's making the neighborhood any nicer. It's not lowering crime, things aren't changing, it's just more expensive. Those new houses are shitty; they're shittily built! There're no frames; those things have rats in them before anyone even lives there. I live in one of those houses and it's essentially like, a pop-up house. Structurally, it's the worst house I've ever lived in by leaps and bounds. It's fuckin' made out of balsa wood.
Christina: Also, the anger. Like, everyone in Point Breeze is really nice and kind. But, I've been riding my bike down 21st Street, about to turn onto Oakford, and heard an older man say, "Stupid bitch, tearin' down all my houses. Fucking ruining my neighborhood." Not because I'm personally doing that stuff, but because I'm a fucking white person in his neighborhood. I've felt that intense anger directed towards me. Their neighborhood is getting fucked up and ruined.
Hart: Also, we're only talking about South Philly. I mean, North Philly is a completely different story; it's absolutely insane. South Philly is pretty nice compared to it. If poor people just keep getting pushed further and further towards the suburbs, someday you'll see multiple families living in these big suburban houses, but it will not be a nice place. Life is difficult there if you're poor. You have to drive everywhere. Public transportation sucks out there.
Allen: There's no convenience in it.

MRR: There are a lot of interesting lines in "Point Breeze" that I've been trying to wrap my head around. Like, when Christina sings, "My vice is running out of steam," because, you know, most of the song is telling this story of these changes just kind of happening around this person and how they don't know what to think about it. But, to me, a vice indicates some type of intention.

Matt: I think that line kind of means, my good intentions are running out of steam and it's become a vice. We were struggling with this question that we've been talking about this entire time: whether or not we're gentrifying this neighborhood. It's like my good intentions are running out of steam and it seems like, maybe I'm not doing a good thing. You know that song is like, "I want somewhere to live," and that's the argument for it, so it's sort of posing both sides of the argument.

MRR: You also talk about "whistlin' Dixie" in that song. What's that about? Is there a connection to the South or I am reading too far into this?

Christina: I think it's kind of just being unaware of our whiteness, just not even thinking about it. It's like we're whistlin' Dixie, just being offensive without even trying.
Kyle: There's like a night and day sort of thing in that song. The first verse is like, we're just strolling along obliviously…
Hart: And, then at night, it's a different story.



MRR: Like we talked about, the two records seem really different lyrically. There're like, two opposing themes almost. Like, the last record, it seemed like there seemed to be a lot of rejection and almost, hopelessness. But, it seems like Sheer Mag is fighting back against those things on this record. The second record seems to be more about perseverance and strength.

Matt: I don't know if we consciously tried to do that.
Hart: We did make a conscious decision to write more political songs.
Matt: Right, we wanted to try and think more about organized labor and that whole jawn[1] on this record. I guess the strength comes from the call for solidarity amongst everyone. There's something bubbling up in this country that I don't think has been this apparent since, maybe the Civil Rights Movement, or maybe since MOVE, here in Philly.[2]
Hart: I can tell that there are new political possibilities in the U.S. now.

MRR: It almost seems like lines like, "When the yuppies push us out / the boys are picking me up and sticking around" in "Fan the Flames" are answering those questions that you asked in "Point Breeze." It's like, there's the solution.

A lot's changed since the first record, not only musically and lyrically, but also the band's increasing notoriety. It's not just *Maximum Rocknroll* that loves Sheer Mag, right? *Rolling Stone* and NPR are pretty down as well. I wonder if there's a connection between the fact that the band has located these political solutions and Sheer Mag's newfound fame. Is it important to have a different message now that it's reaching more people?

Kyle: I think that's absolutely it.
Christina: Yeah, we want to be saying something substantial. That was a huge part of it. We wanted to have a message.
Kyle: Yeah, lyrically and everything. Musically too.

MRR: The last show Sheer Mag played was a benefit for protesters in Baltimore. While the band played, there were videos of the recent protests in that city around the death of Freddie Gray by Baltimore police being projected on the wall behind the stage. That felt like a moment when the band's politics were pretty clearly articulated during a performance. It felt really powerful to me. So, what's the connection between things like the protests in Baltimore and the music that Sheer Mag plays?

Matt: I guess it's an underlying sense of solidarity. There's a tinge of white guilt in the songwriting and you know, we're trying to be considerate and also have empathy for situations that we aren't necessarily living in. I think the music tries to communicate some of that.
Hart: All I have to say is that I support them. That's it.

Contact **Sheer Mag** at sheermag.bandcamp.com or sheermag99@gmail.com

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1 • *Jawn* is a ubiquitous Philly slang term, and probably my favorite one. According to Matt, *jawn* is a «noun that means a noun.» You can kind of use it to mean whatever you want, which is what makes it so great. «Yo, pass me that jawn over there.»

2 • Editor's Note: We conducted this interview on the 30th anniversary of the Philadelphia Police Department's bombing of the political organization MOVE's West Philly compound. The blast killed eleven people and destroyed over sixty homes. Since the 1985 tragedy, the city has reconstructed the homes, but the construction was so spotty that most of the houses have since been condemned and remain abandoned to this day.

SIX TWO FIVE

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BUCK BILOXI AND THE FUCKS

PART ONE intervew by Eric Oblivion:
Buck Biloxi and the Fucks is a punk band spearheaded by and sometimes comprised entirely of Rob Craig. He (me) recently took the opportunity to corner Eric Oblivian, with assistance from his son Wilson, and his friend Hemant and to make them ask him (me) questions about what a cool guy they think he is. No big deal. Who really cares, anyway...
Photos provided by Josh Miller.

MRR: Do you have an idea for the tone? Do you want the interview to be wacky?
Rob: I don't know.
MRR: Ok, it's up to us Hemant. Wilson, it's up to us.
Rob: Yeah.
MRR: Wilson, it's up to us! What's your first question?
Wilson: Do you like bananas?
Rob: Yeah... I mean, I like them ok.
Wilson: I *like* bananas.
MRR: Wilson likes bananas. I have a question. Who thought of you?
Rob: Oh man. Really, I don't think anyone really thought of me. I feel like people kind of provoked me to emerge.

MRR: So do you feel like you are, in essence, rock in opposition?
Rob: Not intentionally, maybe, but probably in fact.

MRR: Well Rock Against Racism works so I think maybe you can do good things when you're against...
Rob: Yeah nothing combats racism better than white people stealing black people's music.
Wilson: RAARRRRRAARARAAARRRRRAARRARRR. *[to Hemant]* Can you put this mask on?

MRR: So do you think your music has to progress or change at all? Is that interesting at all?
Rob: I don't know if that's something I can predict or influence. Most of the stuff I do is improvised, really. I just sit down and play a drum beat without really thinking of any melody, and then, like, go back and listen to it and come up with a riff, almost after I hit record I really come up with it. So I don't think it's useful for me to think about it evolving. It's like a game of telephone with myself. I think after enough times of it iterating it might be different.

Hemant: So is this a Giorgio Murderer interview or is it a Buck Biloxi interview?
Rob: I don't know.
MRR: No, I think it's Buck Biloxi. I don't think we should intermingle them. That way you get two interviews. *Marketing...* Yeah, I think one of the things I liked about Buck Biloxi was it sounded like it wasn't made to appeal to anybody, and it didn't matter if it continued or not. And it has managed to, which is great, you know. It looks like you're sort of doing one thing and you can keep doing it, which is the best. When you have to keep changing all the time, it just gets stale, which is the funniest thing, but it's really lame.
Wilson: The pizza's in my mouth, and it's hot!
Rob: I feel like what you're talking about is people trying to figure out what's going to work. What can I do that people are going to be into? I think I'm just repeating what you're saying.

MRR: Did you think people were going to like this stuff when you did it, or did you care?
Rob: [*Bullshits about himself for a minute before making fun of the guy's pants on TV.]* I think I try to make fun of and undermine the idea of me trying to entertain people, but only in the service of trying to entertain people.

MRR: We're talking about it like really high-concept shit but I don't think...
Rob: Yeah, I mean all of this bullshit is just me after the fact trying to overanalyze it.

MRR: Yeah I think that's the reason that interviews suck.
Rob: Yeah, this one...
MRR: Especially!
Rob: Especially!

MRR: Any good conspiracies you want to talk about?
Rob: I don't know...Oh well, OK, I used to wash dishes at this

I REALLY LIKE THE BLEAKNESS AND THE FACT THAT PEOPLE ARE HAVING A BAD TIME. THAT'S SOMETHING YOU DON'T SEE ENOUGH OF.

BUCK BILOXI

Mexican restaurant in Mobile, AL and there was this guy I used to work with that had just gotten discharged from the army, and this was before all the drone stuff was made public, and he was bragging to me about he was flying some robot in Iraq and he was saying "You can see the people on the camera and you get to kill them! It's so cool!" And I was like, number one, you're insane, and number two, you're a liar, because no such technology exists. But now...it happened.

MRR: They end up washing dishes in Mobile...I guess they have no marketable skills after they get out of the army...man, we're overanalyzing the whole thing. I don't want to do it anymore really. So are you a throwback band? Or is it a futuristic band? Do you hate modern bands?
Rob: I feel like there are no modern bands. I am the only modern band. Everyone else is trying to rip off something from a couple decades ago or rip off something from last decade or else it's something completely cooked up.

MRR: I kind of feel like the *Killed By Death* comps, and the *Back From the Grave* comps too, highlight people who were trying to sound like somebody but were doing it completely wrong, and they were in their own little world. You're trying to be the Rolling Stones but you're only thirteen and you can't really play guitar. Or you're trying to be punk and you end up being Tapeworm. I think even for people that appreciate that stuff, it's kind of hard to do that kind of thing now, it almost takes scenes like in the south where people really don't care about you, or really hate you.
Rob: Yeah, I mean I'm in my early thirties and pretty much throughout my twenties I was trying to play in bands with people who weren't really on board with what I wanted to do and was playing to people who really didn't get it. And it's really cool to even be able to go somewhere and play a show to somebody who thinks, "Oh hey, this is cool."

MRR: Yeah but an R.E.M. cover band could say that—it's cooler when you're actually doing something good. One of the coolest things about being in a band in a cheesy way is just being able to pick up and go somewhere and people know who you are and you get free drinks. It doesn't matter if you even make any money. You can't just be somebody that sells tile and say "I'm going to go to Birmingham and talk to people who sell tile." Well maybe you can. But especially when you're doing something that's just like, "This is dumb, I really enjoy it, it's against all the things that I hate, it's my own little stand." I think making something like that is great. The idea that someone can get up there and pretend to be the worst band in the world or a band that says I'm the best band in the world but they know they're not...
Rob: Wait, who are you talking about? What are you trying to say?

MRR: I'm saying...um...this band I saw one time...
Rob: Everybody's a critic. You know I have fun, and I joke around, but honestly when I tell people I'm in the best band in the world it rings true to me. In my heart, I feel like I'm not having fun or lying to people. Even though it's silly and even though you can't really say that without being sort of tongue in cheek.

MRR: Well, the idea of there being a best band in the world is ridiculous to begin with. So you know...you are in the best band in the world and if anyone has heard you, they know that. Have you ever considered sampling music?
Rob: Uh-huh. Yeah, I do it all the time. On the most recent Buck Biloxi 12" there's a sample of a laugh on a cover of the Queers song "I'm Useless." I had to use a sample because I couldn't laugh and have it be as good as their laugh.

MRR: So what about your videos? Where do you get all that stuff? How does that work?
Rob: Do I have videos?

The next 30 minutes are so are consumed by Rob making everyone watch videos of him on YouTube. Hemant's dog barks at the screen angrily.

Wilson: *[singing along with "Weirdos On The Street"]* Recipes, oh recipes!
MRR: Can we hear that again? What's the beardo recipes?

Rob plays a video that is ten hours of the theme from The Terminator

MRR: So what appeals to you about cyborg technology?
Rob: I think more than the technology in the *Terminator* movies, I really like the bleakness and the fact that people are having a bad time. That's something you don't see enough of.

Hemant: Is this the actual theme?
MRR: I would guess so.
Hemant: So like...
MRR: They just looped it.
Rob: Yeah.

AND GIORGIO MURDERER

Part Two!

MRR received the previous transmission, but being that we at the mag are maniac Buck Biloxi and the Fucks/Giorgio Murderer fans, we felt that this story needed further investigation. After the initial reconnaissance conducted by Eric Oblivian et al we sent reporter Layla Gibbon in for more info on both Buck Biloxi and Giorgio Murderer and the mysterious man behind it all…

MRR: How did you get into punk?

When I was in high school in the mid to late '90s I was hanging out with a bunch of bad dudes smoking cigarettes and just like not giving a fuck about standing near a locker with some weird color hair or something dumb like that. Some of these people knew about some records. There was a lot of bad stuff going on in that period of time and I'm not going to say I didn't like some of it. It was a wild time when I was saving up my bubblegum pennies to buy some record out of the back of some zine that you couldn't just hear on the internet so when you got it, it was terrible. Playing shitty Stratocaster copies with really high action and starting bands that were really shitty because of listening to all of those shitty records, I guess.

MRR: What was the first record you heard that made you think, "I could do that, I *will* do that"?

This is probably not exactly the answer you're looking for, but I used to really feel like that even before I discovered punk, back before I was old enough to make my own decisions about music consumption. Just listening to the regular old shit my mom and dad would listen to I used to sing along to it and feel like I wanted to make records. But punk definitely sort of made the actual steps to being able to do it clearly visible and accessible. I had been listening to punk rock for a couple of years but had kind of quit playing guitar in those couple of years. Also, when my friend Matt showed me how to play "Nervous Breakdown" on guitar. I don't want to necessarily say that I learned that punk was easier to play than some of the more complicated stuff that I had been trying to play before, because I don't think that that's completely true, but I think it excited me in a way that meant that the work of learning how to do it well was something I was willing to do. I mean every jackass at Guitar Center is going to tell you that it's easy to just play a few power chords over and over again in the same sequence, but what none of them can do is be direct and consistent and care about what they're doing. Did I answer the question? I've definitely started talking about something completely different now.

MRR: Where did you grow up and how do you think that affected your idea of punk/sound?

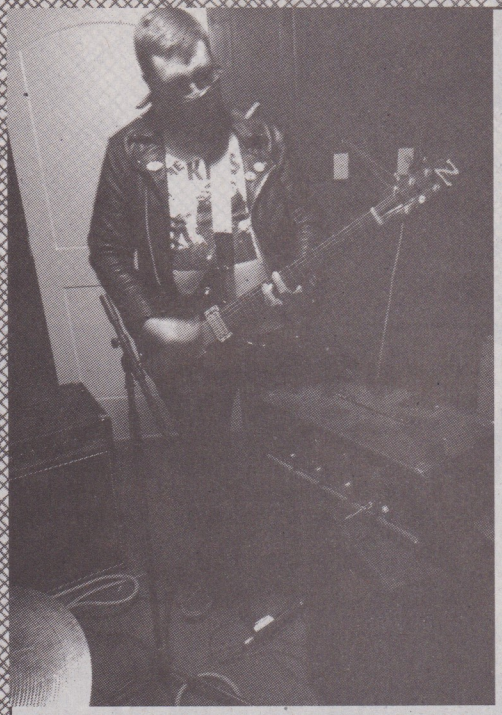
I grew up in Mobile, Alabama. I think the Southeastern U.S. has a lot of really mean and tough bands because there's a lot of poverty and religious bullshit around here. Not that everybody in those mean bands grew up poor or in a repressive religious home but they're still part of a culture that is generally affected by that stuff. My bands probably don't sound all that mean but I guess I say some mean and dark shit sometimes in the lyrics. The Midwest is pretty tough. I have met some serious people on both coasts and I think you guys are great, but my grandfather was a sharecropper and I was raised to believe you're not supposed to be having that much fun.

MRR: I like the idea of the Fucks being interchangeable, like a pick-up band, Chuck Berry style. Was this out of necessity to realize your creative vision? In short, is Buck Biloxi a creative dictator who will not tolerate potentially disobedient side musicians?

I guess. I mean I don't want to not be able to play something because somebody can't do it. I like being able to just make a record by myself and not have to call anybody or schedule anything. But on the other hand, I do have kind of an exacting vision about what my songs should sound like, and because of that I value my relationships with musicians who are able to play the songs right. Some people think that because the songs are simple that it's just some bullshit that you don't have to think about or do correctly. And that's fine. I can offer little incentive for anyone to care about playing in the band if playing in the band isn't enough incentive. Probably most actual dictators pay their people a lot more and are willing to be more violent than I am so they probably have more leeway when it comes to barking out orders. But if it comes time to find a lineup for something specific I would rather play with people who know what they're doing than not, if I have the option.

MRR: Did you have a firm idea of what sounds you wanted to create, like a particular band concept?

The first thing I had was a dumb name. When I first moved to New Orleans, I recorded a few songs by myself that became the first Buck Biloxi 7" before I had anybody to play with. I didn't even have a firm idea of what those songs were going to sound like while I was recording



them. Listening back to it, I don't really think it sounds like a cohesive record or even a cohesive band. I'm still not sure I have a firm idea of what this band is. Am I punk? Is it possible to get some kind of a certificate from *MRR* certifying that I am punk? It would really soothe my fragile ego.

MRR: What was your weirdest tour experience? Most degrading? Coolest? Most fun?

Weirdest: Niagara Falls. Looking across the river to Canada and seeing a bunch of people over there. It's like they all have their own lives and stuff they do. Just like us! Just imagine.

Most Degrading: San Francisco. Hemlock Tavern. They made me give them my social security number so they could issue me a W-2 tax form for the $35 bucks we made that night. I'm not saying my band is too important to make $35, but I don't think that bar is a big enough deal to give me a W-2 form either.

Coolest: Undisclosed location in a medical marijuana state. Buying weed in an illegal speakeasy dispensary. Just like buying weed illegally at home but in a store!

Most fun: United States. Making fun of tollbooth people in the van with Andy Rotzz. "Every day, I get up and come sit in this booth all day and take the tolls. Then I go home and go to sleep." Every time we passed another tollbooth we would come up with some new shitty boring condition of this fictional toll collector's life and talk about it in the voice of this fictional ideal tollbooth collector guy we made up. We would shut up about it for a second when we actually got up to the window and resume immediately after we drove off. I would hate to have that job.

MRR: Are there any rivalries between Buck Biloxi and Giorgio Murderer in terms of competing for attention and time?

Nah.

MRR: The Giorgio 45 was one of my records of 2015, so sick, like Remo Voor was a synth punk band! Is it a bedroom/home recording thing? Maybe everything you do is this, and that is why it is all such genius destruction.

Thanks! Yeah, I write and record everything at home myself simultaneously. It's a totally different workflow than writing a song, bringing it to practice and working on it until you feel like everybody's got it down well enough to go have somebody else record it. It doesn't feel as fresh and fun to me doing it that way.

MRR: Are there more things in the works?

I'm working on a Giorgio Murderer LP. I have three or four songs recorded for it so far I think. I'm also working on a Linux-only Giorgio Murderer computer game scheduled to come out in 2017. I'm having trouble indicing the highlight tile sprites correctly right now. I play guitar in a band called Black Abba that is all women except me and we have a 7" coming out soon.

MRR: Fifty more band concepts for 2020.

Due to various nondisclosure agreements, I can only divulge the first 25:

1) Cover Band: A cover band that does a cover set of some band's songs like on halloween but never on halloween, it's a different band every time, and the flyer doesn't say what band it is and we will never leak that information out before the show.

2) Radical Lords of Warez: Mp3-only electronic keygen music project.

3) Sir Richard Holotrash Band

4) 3-D Microwaves: Me and Steve Kenney make a drum machine really slow and smoke a bunch of weed and make bong gurgles over it

5) Ultrahumans II: sequel to old band the Ultrahumans, with me and Gary Wrong.

6) Serious Shits

7) American Lotion: Me and Drew Owen's recording project.

8) Fossil Fuel Cover Band: Distinct from Cover Band, this band will openly say that we are covering Fossil Fuel songs and will perform on Halloween.

9) Field Recordings and Positive Affirmations: Double LP of birds chirping and soothing voiceovers.

10) "Weird" Al Qaeda: *Even Worser* LP.

11) Zeroth: Me playing a Farfisa or Vox Continental along to a Korg Rhythm-33 drum machine and crashing on a ride cymbal. There are ten women with puppets and maracas.

12) Skype Pussy: Me and Ulysses Eater from No Bails mailing a cassette four track back and forth. I'm the rhythm section.

13) DJ Jazzy Breath: My new DJ name.

14) Tim Percent and the Free Dogs

15) Buthole: Not a typo. The "*th*" is pronounced like "*th*ing" or "labyrin*th*." Anarcho-punk band. We will have some kind of symbol you can put on a buttflap in South America. All our songs will be about war and mass media and shit.

16) Pan and Scan: Two piece band with elaborate costumes and set dressing junk. Scan plays step sequencer and monosynth. Pan plays guitar and vocals. I'll be either one, I don't care.

17) Gas Money Millionaires

18) Good Listeneers: All-male power pop band with a totalitarian face-shaving policy.

19) The Condos: Slowpunk.

20) Van Beers

21) Masters of Mankind: *Police Lamborghini* EP

22) The Rocky Four Robots: UK82/C86/401k

23) Das Krapital

24) Def Sea Scrollz

25) Restraining Bolt

MRR: Have you heard that song "Gerry and the Holograms"? It's the worst and the best.

I just listened to it. It's OK. They could stand to punch it up a little.

MRR: What are your top ten current songs?

I'm going to give you half again for the sake of consistency:

1) Coneheads – "Waste of Space (Night Fever)"

2) Joust – "Sprouting Seeds"

3) Vatican Dagger– "The Mess"

4) Midnite Snaxxx – "Don't Wake Me Up"

5) Pampers – "Right Tonight"

MRR: If you could go back in time and destroy one musician to save the future from their terrible sounds who would it be and how would you do it?

There was this really great graffiti that used to be on the back of a Dollar General store in Mobile that just said "RANDY NEWMAN SUCK PEE PEE." Seriously, though, it wouldn't be a bad idea to recruit someone in the early '80s to take out John Lennon before he ever got a chance to do any of that really terrible stuff he did in the late '80s. I think I will, actually. Probably by the time this goes to print, history will record that that is indeed what happened, and that's what we all will remember always having been the case.

What is the most awkward thing that has happened at a show?

I probably tried to talk to somebody or something like that.

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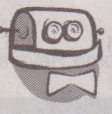

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THE NO TALENTS

When garage met punk in the '90s the No-Talents out of Paris were one of the best bands on the scene. Their 1996 eponymous debut album was a MRR favorite. Although they played shows all over Europe, they only toured the US once in 1998. Now to celebrate the re-release of that great album, the No-Talents are hitting a few West Coast stages. MRR spoke with the band to find out what's behind all this nostalgia. The No-Talents are Cecilia M. (vocals), Lili Z. (guitar & backing vocals), Iwan L. (bass), Laurent B. (drums) and Mark A. (drums on the second album). Interview and introduction by Carolyn Keddy

MRR: Why reunite?
Because we had an itch to play No-Talents-type punk rock again. We did when Cecilia came back to Paris in the summer of 2012. Just us four and only one rehearsal, it was very exciting! That gave us the idea. But Cecilia is living in Portland now so we didn't play again until 2014 at the Funtastic Dracula Festival in Spain.

MRR: Please give readers who may be unfamiliar with the No-Talents a history of the band. How did you start? What was the inspiration? What were you aiming to accomplish?
In short, we played fast, Avengers-meets-Ramones sort of punk rock. Very '60s rock'n'roll influenced but with an edge of early hardcore, furious girl vocals and no guitar solos. We didn't really want to accomplish something. Just get the most thrills and kicks out of playing the particular sound we had in mind. And we wouldn't let anything get in our way. Bands we covered: VKTMS, Blitzkrieg Bop, Bulldozer, Starshooter, Black Flag, Ralph Nielsen & the Chancellors, Christine Pilzer, Action Pact, Trend, Violators, Stagebeast, Avengers, Metal Urbain.

We started in 1995 with two Sick Things (the UK band) covers at a party. A few months later Cecilia and Iwan put out the first album on their Wild Wild Records label, followed by an EP on Lili and Jack's Royal Records, 3 further EPs and a second album on Estrus Records in 1998. We split in 1999.

MRR: Were there any difficulties with getting the band back together and revisiting the music?
Laurent wasn't really up for a reunion. But we could talk him into doing just the Funtastic Dracula show because he wanted to go there anyway. He did a Steve & the Jerks and an Anteenagers MC reunion show at the same time. Hopefully he hasn't decided to retire...Mark is very busy with his current band. So Cecilia asked Tim, the drummer of her band Sex Crime, if he'd be into drumming with us on the West Coast tour.

MRR: Will you be updating the sound to reflect the present decade?
Are you crazy? No sound updates at all! We wanna sound exactly the same as in the '90s. Actually we couldn't sound any different, even if we wanted to.

MRR: When the No-Talents were originally playing there weren't many women playing garage punk. What was it like for you to be part of that scene then?
We didn't care so much about gender issues. We just did it. The best way to be a feminist is by action, to do what you want. For yourself and possibly as an example for others. A lot of girls liked us for that reason. And the boys, too.

MRR: Have things changed much these days?
It's hard to tell if the woman thing in particular has changed these days. Because everything has changed a lot since garage punk has become a more widespread thing. It's much less underground now.

MRR: Does everyone in the band still get along?
Oh yes! Iwan and I are currently playing together in Chrome Reverse.

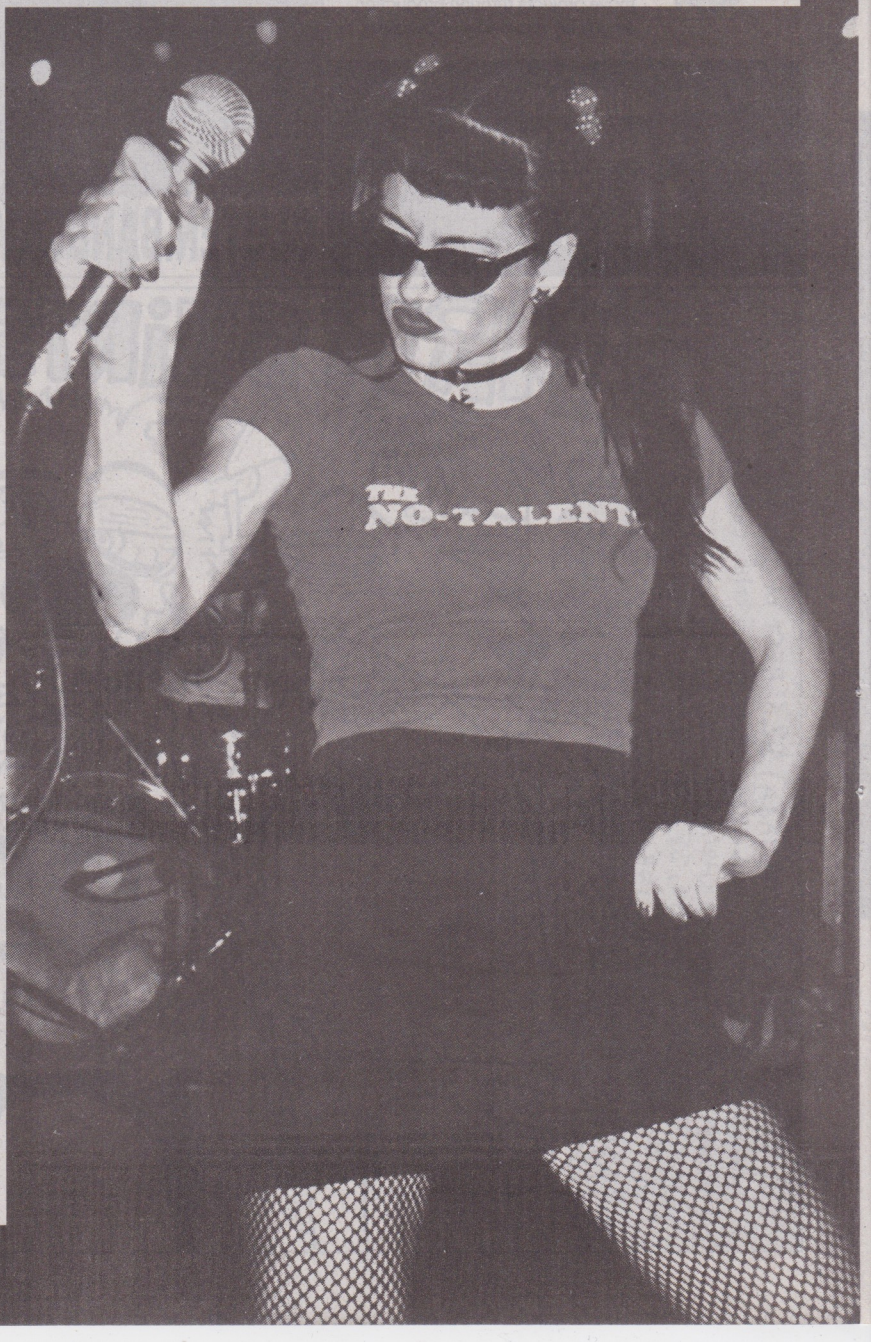

photo: D Halligan

photo: W Draves

photo: S Buick

And we still are best friends with Cecilia, writing and calling each other a lot. Same with Laurent and we also see Mark here and there.

MRR: Will you be playing only songs from the first album on this tour?
Yeah, mostly the first album. But also some songs from our four EPs and three songs from the second album.

MRR: Are there any songs you don't want to perform?
No, we love them all, but we have faves. It's difficult to choose. Almost all are under two minutes but we can't play them all.

MRR: Will you be re-releasing the *...Want Some More!* LP as well?
Nobody asked so far, but yeah why not? Somebody into it out there? It came out on Estrus Records in '99 and there was also a French CD only release on Bondage Records.

MRR: Looking back 20 years later, do you still feel like you had "no talent" back in the '90s?
Absolutely, our own brand! And we're proud of it.

See the No-Talents live:
Friday, August 7th at the Funhouse in Seattle, WA
Saturday, August 8th at the Smmr Bmmr Festival in Portland, OR
Tuesday, August 11th at Old Nick's Pub in Eugene, OR
Thursday, August 13th at Thee Parkside in San Francisco, CA
Friday, August 14th at the Redwood in Los Angeles, CA
Saturday, August 15th at Alex's Bar in Long Beach, CA

Get the reissue of the debut LP from Broken Rekids at brokenrekids.com. While you're at it, check out the many other bands the members have been involved with: Steve & the Jerks, Splash Four, Loud Mufflers, Les Teckels, Anteenagers MC, Lili Z., Les Terribles, Cecilia & ses Ennuis, Volt, Cecilia und die Sauerkrauts, Frustration, Operation S, Danger, Sex Crime and Chrome Reverse.

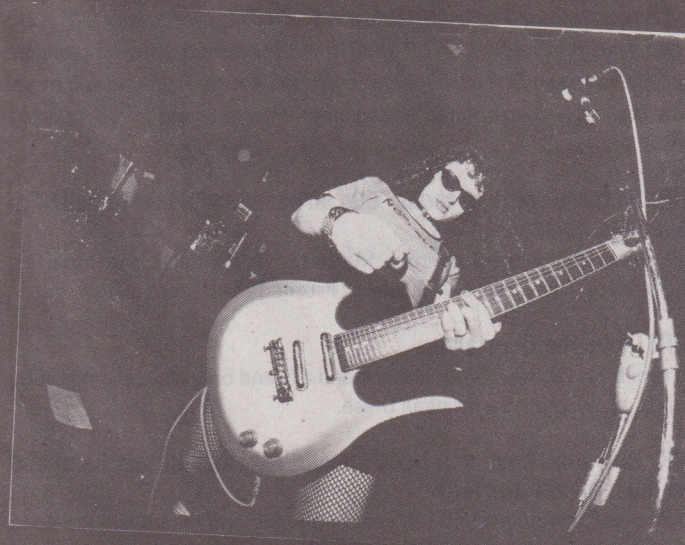

photo: W Draves

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JUANITA Y LOS FEOS

In August, Juanita y los Feos will sally out of Madrid to hatch some high jinx in Mexico and the US. They are not a band of beginners, and not a band easily caged and tagged. Avoidance of category was not necessarily intentional, but came about from a collective decision to do whatever they like. Having played together for nearly a decade, the group had about reached an undeclared end. Their final release, an LP titled Nueva Numancia, became available in 2014. Then in 2015, they found some inspiration to stay active for a little longer. Berserktown Fest asked them to join the lineup. The band will travel from Texas into Mexico and finally end it in California. Eight dates to help us draw the curtains on another hot summer. Interview and introduction by Larry Nance of Bad Hair Life Records. Photos provided by Clara Belles and Pumba.

MRR: Who are the members in this band and what does everyone do?

Fa is the guitar player. Angel plays bass. Adolfo [plays] drums, and Hector plays the keyboards. He is our last incorporation. I, Violeta, sing.

MRR: Who came up with this name and is there a good story behind it?

Well, back in the days when we started we thought it was a good idea. I was a big fan of the girl bands of the '60s where all of them had a name together with the name of the band accompanying them. Back then we were all users of an internet punk music forum, and my user name was Juanita Calamidad. Lots of friends and people started calling me that, so we used it for the name of the band.

MRR: Who are some of those '60s girl bands you mentioned? I'm a huge fan myself!

Well, Diana Ross & the Supremes, Martha & the Vandelas, the Ronettes, the Shirelles. There was a time when I listened to all them a lot.

MRR: I love the Crystals.

I do too! I was DJ-ing in a bar and me and a friend only played songs sung by girls, so we played a lot of all these.

MRR: How long have you been playing together in this band and how did it all get started?

We've been playing around ten years now. Me and Fa are friends since high school and we've always loved making music. We used to record songs with an old tape recorder at his place. With time, we met other

people and we decided to get more serious and start a band. We were all friends. We thought that was important. We just wanted to hang out and have fun.

MRR: What are some other bands you're involved with, past and present?

Well, actually we're not playing lately so right now Adolfo and Hector have another band called Afilador. Angel plays in Peluquería Canina. Fa and I have another project with the drummer of La URSS called Rata Negra. In the past, Angel had Mano de Mono and Fa was in Paco Frutos y Esposa.

MRR: Your music reminds me of a lot of different kinds of music, but it always carries your trademark. There seems to be a love of creative freedom going on here. Is this a reflection of your own musical tastes?

It could be. We all have very different musical tastes, so at the end I think this is reflected in our music, kind of making us hard to label.

MRR: Are you involved in other art forms?

Angel and Fa both have design studios. So we normally design our own covers and posters. The last one for example is an amazing drawing that Fa made inspired by the lyrics.

MRR: The production videos that you've made are really great! Who had the idea to make these?

We thought it was really fun to do them! The first we made, "No tengo ritmo," was inspired by an idea that Fa had and was recorded at a friend's house. Nobody records videos anymore. Especially in the scene we normally are involved. The other two are more professional and recorded with our friend David Iñurrieta, who worked as a film producer on the other three actually. And we love to make them. It is always real fun, and we love the anticipation as we wait to see what comes out of the recordings.

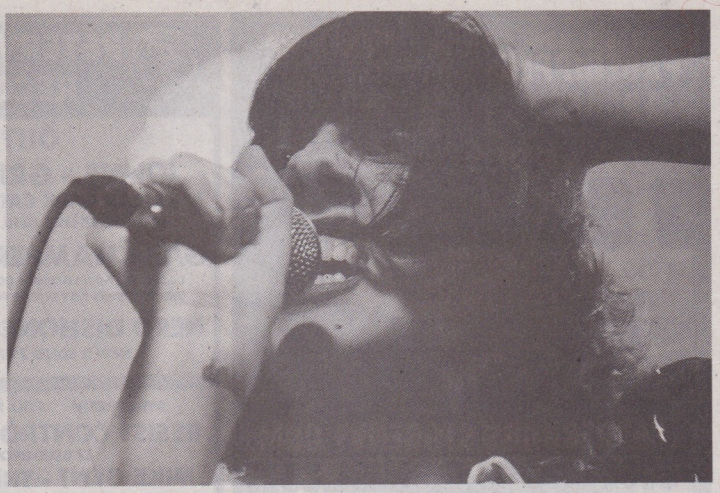
MRR: Outside of music, what else keeps you busy? What do you do for work?

Well, as I told you, Fa and Angel are graphic designers and they own their own studios. I'm a high school art teacher. Adolfo is a sound engineer and he has his own studio and works in a venue. So we're quite busy, yes. With the lack of time, it started to get harder to get some time for rehearsal and to play.

MRR: How is the scene there in Madrid and how is it nationally?

In Madrid it's quite poor. It's a shame. I mean, there are some great bands, but we're always the same old people. There isn't a replacement. The people going to shows are always the same, and we're not exactly young. I think this is a national thing. Great bands, but always made by the same people. Makes me wonder what the hell young people are doing these days.

MRR: That sounds like a story I've heard before. I teach too, but



don't involve my students in this. Of course my students are seven-year-olds and don't care anyway about any of this. I just support them in whatever they like, though I do try to encourage them to see things from different perspectives. Do you have students who go to shows there?

It's quite difficult. Madrid is a pretty hostile city regarding culture. Venues are for 18 and over, and nobody plays all ages shows so the students I teach wouldn't be allowed at any of the shows. I love to encourage them, but teenagers seem to be just lazy about everything. I never tell them that I have a band. And since they are never interested in this kind of music they never find out. Also, I work in a pretty rich neighborhood so I guess they just do other things like drive their drones around and stuff.

MRR: You brought up a topic that I have been concerned with for quite a while, which is the lack of venues for all ages. Do you think this is something that is important? Would it help attract new blood?

I think is extremely important, once you're 18, if you've never been to a venue or a punk show before, I'm sure you start doing other things and you're already lost, but if you could start watching live music at, I don't know, fifteen, I think there would be many more young people involved in music. When I was fourteen, the law was less strict regarding this. Maybe that's why we [are] all still here.

MRR: In August, you will be touring the United States and Mexico. Have any of you ever toured in North America before?

No, that's why we're all very excited. We just can't believe this is really happening. When we started the band we never thought something like this could happen. I think that releasing our last album with La Vida es Un Mus helped us a lot.

MRR: Any final thoughts? Something I missed that you think is important?

Well, it's really cool that this is happening, but as I told you, we're not currently playing. The band was almost dead when they wrote us from Berserktown and asked us to play there, so we decided to stay active and tour the US, because that's something we've always wanted to do. So, come over and see us while you can! Cause we never know what might happen in the future!

Hear Juanita y los Feos at juanitaylosfeos.bandcamp.com.

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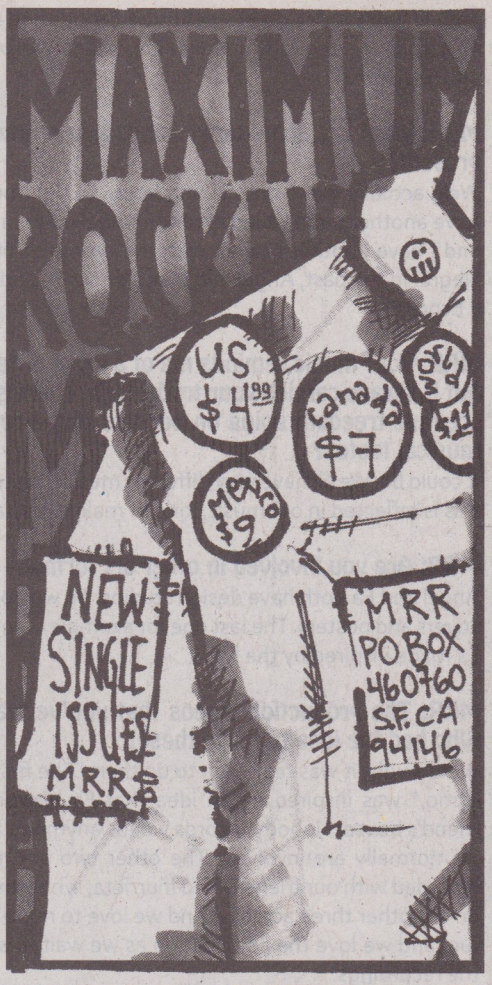

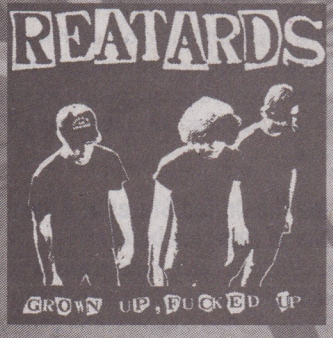

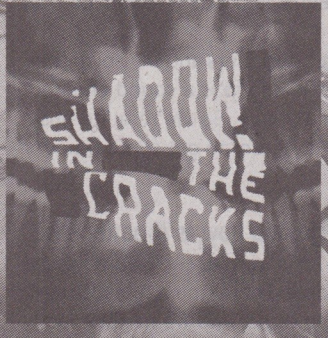

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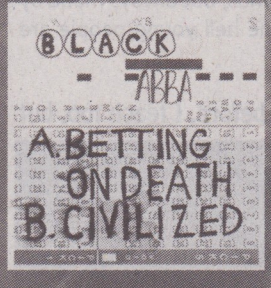

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A few months ago, on a rather chill but clear San Francisco night, I sat down with Rupert Estanislao, whom I'd only just met thanks to Mr. Robert Collins, and had a very long and rather fascinating conversation. Among other things, like working a shitty corporate job, playing in AninoKo and preparing new releases for his label, Aklasan Records—which focuses on releasing and supporting Filipino punk and hardcore bands—he also just put out Pinoi Punk: Filipino Americans in Punk and Hardcore, *a documentary on Pinoi punk (to be reviewed within these pages soon!) and is gearing up for the second edition of Aklasan festival, happening Saturday, July 18th, at the Bindlestiff Studio in SOMA in San Francisco.*

He's been a motivator and supporter of the local Bay Area and intercontinental Filipino-American punk scene for decades, and I could tell, from his eloquent expression, cross-section perspective, and in-depth historical knowledge of related punk and politics. We talked for hours about immigration, gentrification, colonization, prisons, punks, bands and scenes. I found him to be passionate and humble, both soft-spoken and jovially expressive. Below is some of what he had to say. Interview and introduction by Lydia Athanasopoulou. Photos by Joe Calixto.

MRR: You're from Manila originally. How and why did you end up in Vallejo?
Both my parents are from the Philippines, but mom was born here shortly after World War II when my grandparents met here. My dad was naturalized. I left Manila when I was a kid, and was brought back to the US so I could be petitioned and become a naturalized resident. Vallejo is a very working class town; it's very diverse. It wasn't always a great place to grow up, but there are a lot of Filipinos there. The Asian-American population in that town, I would say, is pretty much 90% Filipino. It's like that there, in Daly City, Union City, Hercules, Hayward; all these surrounding Bay Area towns.

MRR: Since your arrival in Vallejo, you've moved around a bit, lived in Benicia and Oakland, and, since 2005, in San Francisco. I'm sure you've noticed the changes. For example, San Francisco's median rent just hit the ludicrous amount of $4,225!
I've been to other states and other cities—and I love San Francisco—but the way Market Street used to look in the '80s is so different to what it looks like now. All those condos—it's nuts how much they're going for. And then you have a whole other community like in the Mint Mall on Sixth Street. Sixth Street in SOMA [South of Market] is a rough spot with a lot of destitute and homeless people and drug dealers, and the Mint Mall is a very low-income affordable housing unit that's full of single-room occupancies. Within those SROs and

studios you have families of eight to eleven people, and they're always Filipino, or they're older Filipino folks who came here as veterans. And this is now; this is today. Many were veterans who fought in the war, who came here for some recognition of their service as promised to them while they were guerrilla fighters and they're still fighting for that equity. So they live there because it's cheap—but it's also a dangerous place to live, it's infested with bed bugs, and it's really, really small. So it's crazy that you have people who are working tech jobs willing to live in matchbox houses for such insane amounts.

I know a lot of people who work in the community and work in gang prevention, or work in after-school programs. So you have that, and then you have this influx of new money coming in that doesn't care about any of it. Even the difference between Valencia and Mission Street. Mission used to be gang, shoot 'em up street, dealers, stuff like that, at least at night in some parts. And then there were also the other communities who lived there. Now, Valencia Street is completely white washed, yuppified. Leather Tongue Video used to be there; that was a punk store, and it's gone. Mission Records used to be there. That's gone. San Francisco's really changing, and I'm just seeing two different sides of it and it's disheartening sometimes.

MRR: Tell me about your label. What motivated you to start it and what have you done with it so far?
I started it in 2012, shortly before I got married. My friend and I, Josh, who used to play in a band called Our Turn, we used to play in a band together called Echo of Bullets. A lot of the labels in the Philippines were putting out vinyl. Mutilated Noise was putting out vinyl, the guys in Bad Omen, Middle Finger Productions was putting out vinyl—we needed some way to distribute it over here. And he has a band called Digma which is here in the Bay Area and they're an all-Filipino D-beat band, so I was thinking, OK, let's start putting stuff out.

In the late '90s there was a band called Signal 3, and Signal 3 was the first ever Filipino-American punk band. They were five skinhead dudes, and I loved that band when they were around. I hung out with them at their place in LA, and we played with them here but, for various reasons, they decided to quit. I just wanted to put out a shirt of theirs—because I really liked the band and I wanted to support it—so I put out a shirt, and then people started ordering and I thought, "Oh shit, I can keep doing this." So I put out a shirt and an embroidered patch for them and then started thinking, let's put out a band, let's put out Digma 'cause that's a Filipino band from the Bay Area. So I put their tape out and then it went from there. I got into a project with Bad Omen, which is John Fishbone and company from the Philippines, and I helped them re-release the Bad Omen self-titled LP, that was released in four countries; Germany, Singapore, the Philippines and the US, in four different colors of vinyl. And then Namatay Sa Ingay [NSI] from New York was starting to get ground and I thought they sounded really good. I wanted to support [NSI] so I decided to put out their cassette, make a run of shirts for them... just to have shit, you know? To have around.

Most recently we released a cassette for a band from San Jose, also majority Asian-American, Filipino, called VWLS. We've played with them a lot too. Also, we had a benefit show for Kearny Street Workshop, and it was all Filipino and Latino bands. It was Bruja, who kind of sound like Toxic Holocaust, they're all Latino kids who grew up in SF, Monte from San Jose, and my own band AninoKo, VWLS from San Jose, and Digma. Ever since I started the label I've been meeting so many different Filipinos in punk and hardcore bands, it's weird. They'll message me, "Hey, I'm in this band" or the other Filipinos I know from the Philippines will tell me about a new band, or my friend, my cousin...That's how I found out about a band called RHDP from Virginia. They just played a show with [NSI] in New York a few months ago.

MRR: You are also preparing Aklasan Fest Vol. 2. Tell us more about it.
When we put the first one on, I was surprised it was so packed. And it was also those same bands: it was VWLS' first show, AninoKo's first show, Digma, a band called Moxiebeat from Riverside, CA—they're members of Dogs of Ire and my friends in Sharkfin. And I'd never made that much money at a show. A lot of my friends checked it out, and lot of random Asian-Americans checked it out because they just wanted to know about it. So it wasn't necessarily a punk crowd, even though the people who were in the bands were punks playing in punk bands. In punk you're taught to just do it yourself, so Josh and I were like, okay, we'll just do it ourselves.

MRR: That's the spirit! Why wait around for anyone else to make it happen? Have you had to deal with any criticism for being focused on Filipino and Asian-American punk?
We did—I was playing in Eskapo and with most bands that I've played in, we've received that criticism. "Why are you trying to separate yourself?" even though we aren't trying. I like a lot of stuff from England, but they're singing about stuff in England because they're from England, and American kids are singing about stuff from the Midwest because they're from the Midwest. We're immigrants, we're going to sing about where we're from and our backgrounds. It's weird, because I don't think we ever tried to separate ourselves. We'd ask other bands to play and they couldn't, so OK, let's just ask our friends. Actually Devin from Conquest for Death is really cool because, first of all, he's a really big fan of Filipino pop culture, like weird pop culture stuff. But he'd always include us and other punks of color in their shows. I remember one year *Maximum* did a show with Needles, La Grita, Outraged—they were a band that was, I guess, popular amongst *MRR* in 2008 or so—and it was cool because it was a lot of Latino punks and Conquest for Death playing together. It's weird; it's hard to accept that criticism sometimes....

MRR: So how did punk come into your life?
When I first came here I was into metal because that was the most popular thing in the Philippines at the time, with some punk. But then the community I encountered, because I was a Filipino immigrant, speaking my own language, was like gang culture. All gangster rap and gangbanging, thugged out. And I had to conform to that a little bit...There were punk bands from the Philippines from the '80s, I have their bootleg cassettes. Twisted Red Cross was pretty much the first DIY record label in the Philippines. They put out Dead Ends, G.I. and the Idiots, Private Stock, Philippine Violators, WUDS, Third World Chaos, and Urban Bandits, and only 100 cassettes, first pressing, ever made it out. I don't even know where they are. And some of those guys have emigrated here.

Punk seemed like it was violent in the '80s, throughout the whole world, so it was a different time for them when they were punks, a lot of violence was going on. It was also the time of martial law when that shit came about, and it was a lot harder to play that kind of music and be openly critical of the government when it was so repressive; there was so much state violence going on.

MRR: When did martial law start in the Philippines?
Martial law started in the '60s. It was implemented by Ferdinand Marcos after an assassination attempt on his wife Imelda.

MRR: The one with all the shoes!

Yes, the shoes, and the crazy projects that killed workers. All of those shoes were bought with the people's money. I remember that decade—I wasn't that cognizant, but during the '80s I remember marching with my relatives out on the street. Everyone was just emptying it all out, they'd had enough.

MRR: Were there riots?
Not riots, because the Philippines is a very Catholic country, so there was a lot of non-violent protest. It was basically the EDSA Revolution. EDSA is a long strip of road that cuts across all of Manila and Quezon City, and they went out and marched on EDSA, and leading them were the priests and the nuns. They did that because they didn't think the soldiers would shoot them, and they didn't. They had shot farmers who were striking, they had shot other protesters, but they did not shoot the religious sect. Punk was born out of that, with Twisted Red Cross Records, with those early bands, Dead Ends, G.I. and the Idiots, Intoxication of Violence.

This was from 1978 and into the '80s, and martial law was still in effect. Martial law ended in 1986. So those bands still existed at the time, and I think that's what led to the limited runs of cassettes. I remember reading about and people telling me stories about actors and politicians who would go to these punk shows, because it was a new thing, and they would be appalled by what was going on.

MRR: Did the government censor punk bands? Was it risky to sing against the establishment back then?
I was just listening to the Dead Ends and they have a song called "I Don't Want to Be President" and G.I. and the Idiots also had inflammatory lyrics against the government. The government was too busy, concerned with the Muslim rebels and the Communist rebels that they didn't really notice that part. And there were also a lot of student protests going on at that time, with far more people participating than in the punk scene. So although there was that repression, it just didn't get noticed. A hundred cassettes each for, like, ten bands is not a lot. So people would dub them and dub them. When I first got word of that music, it was from like a sixth- or seventh-generation cassette tape that I could barely hear anymore because it was dubbed over so much. After martial law ended in '86 a lot of those musicians ended up becoming new wave bands.

MRR: As so many punk bands of the time around the world did...
It was a lot more palatable. People who were in other, harder bands like Intoxication of Violence and Dead Ends, they continued making music n other scenes, like in the crossover metal scenes. Dead Ends had a crossover metal record called *Mamatay Sa Ingay* (Death by Noise) which NSI named themselves after. They went metal, and so did G.I. and so did Philippine Violators. And Philippine Violators and WUDS got signed to major labels and they started playing Pinoi rock, or Filipino rock. That got popular and they kind of made a living off of that. So they did go for the bucks but there was always an underlying scene beneath that.

There was a band called Biofeedback, they came about in '89 or so. They kind of introduced that streetcore style, because it was a bunch of street kids. I remember hearing about the drummer getting murdered or something because he made some shoddy gun deal. It was pretty real.

Another story someone told me: they were playing a show and a guy sat on or bumped into some of their equipment and some guy

grabbed him and said, "You want us to kill this guy for you?" And they were like, "No, that's not cool, thanks!" I guess at the time it was a lot of gang culture and stuff like that. My bandmate used to tell me about different punk gangs that formed in different parts of the cities. There were skinhead gangs and there were punk gangs and all kinds of little gangs. So there was always a background to all those bands that progressed and become, you know, musicians. That's kind of what happened after martial law. Punk became more popular but it also became safer.

Through the years, other DIY collectives have come up and started putting out stuff, from the crust scene, from the hardcore scene, from the Oi! scene, and kind of grew out of that and it's very much influenced by the west. You can tell. One person from there told me that when a band wants to become popular they sing in Tagalog, they sing in the native tongue. But if they want to be underground or DIY, they'll sing in English. It was weird. Also the ethics, the music of the DIY scene over there is different from what's in the popular limelight. They still believe in DIY, they still have the anti-machismo, anti-sexist stance on things, won't support certain projects, etc. That's kind of what happened after martial law; all these scenes grew into themselves as the early '80s bands started making money off their stuff and become new wave or alternative bands.

MRR: You mentioned earlier that during martial law there was also a student movement. Did that and punk ever intersect?
They did. Martial law began, everybody speculated, because Marcos wanted to stay in power longer. So he made up an assassination attempt against his wife, supposedly by the communist party, in order to implement martial law. My elders would say that the first few years of martial law was the best time, it was the most prosperous time in the country, things were very clean, etc., but there was also a lot of repression going on. People were getting killed and disappeared for speaking out. People couldn't speak out in a classroom without closing the door to make sure certain people weren't listening in. There was a curfew; past 10 p.m., if people were still out, they were liable to getting picked up by police or military and harassed, or worse.

There was a correlation between the student movement, which was largely popular, and the punk movement. And the students oftentimes supported dockworkers, fisher folk, and farmers, because that's the majority in the Philippines. There were people with punk aesthetics within the student movement, people who were leftists who became teachers out of that student movement who still teach now in various schools in the Philippines that espouse a lot of leftist beliefs from that time.

A lot of those early bands were lower to middle-middle class, back when you had a decent middle class, people who had regular jobs and could have space to have equipment. Some of the people were very poor, and they just had talent. I know this guy now and he's a great drummer, and I asked him if in the Philippines he ever owned a drum set and he said he didn't. So I asked him where he learned to play and he said, "at practice." You just learned right there. He never had drums until he came here. Back then it was a lot of middle-class supporting the lower classes in that respect. That's kind of how it had to be.

MRR: Are there punk scenes in other cities?
Yeah. There's a scene in Manila, a scene in Bulacan, a scene in Tarlac, in Pampanga, all northern towns. And then there's a scene in Cebu City, a scene in Samar—these are other islands in the central part. And in the southern part there's the Davao scene, and the Bacolod scene and those are all kind of joined together. And they do tours up and down, so northern bands will go to the south and southern bands will go to the north, so they do communicate. And because we're from here, I think what Aklasan did is make people aware of the fact that there is this American label that specializes in this stuff, promoting shows from these areas that are very much rural areas—dirt roads, not a lot of lights, that kind of thing. And there are a lot of hardcore bands that are, you know, that beat-down hardcore, but there are also hardcore punk bands. So I feel we're one in a couple of different labels and individuals helping push that scene forward into exposure.

MRR: Tell me how you got the idea to do the documentary. How did you go about collecting the material for it? It's all finished right?
We just made our second cut. It started because I was part of a group called APAture, which is an Asian-American/Pacific Islander arts festival put on by Kearny Street Workshop where my wife works. And I decided I'd help do that, because if you commit yourself for a year of helping out with the events and helping to organize and curate the events, your art piece gets admission for free.

So, in July 2014 I put on Aklasan Fest, which was all Filipino-American punk bands, and I think around ten or eleven o'clock at night at that show I was kind of drunk and I asked my cousin to come in and film the bands and do some interviews. I was like, "Fuck it, let's just do some interviews." So I went up to my friends and asked them about stuff that we talk about when we're sitting down and having a meal. What's it like being Filipino-American or a Filipino immigrant in a scene that is largely dominated by white males and how the people we listen to are white males. And sometimes we can relate to their experience, but other times we can't. So I decided to interview them all about that. Different people who came from Southern California, my friends from San Jose, my friend Josh whom I've known for many years and gone to shows with for many years.

I wanted to make this documentary also because I knew it would get shown. I was inspired by *Beyond the Screams*, *Taquacore*, and *Afro-Punk*. I wanted to tell this side of the story. This has been going on since 1998 at least—us getting together, playing shows—and no one has ever really documented it from the inside. You'd have students coming in and asking people questions, but they weren't part of that scene, they didn't help organize it. So I thought, I help organize shows all the time, I'm just going to interview my friends. So the main question of the film is, what is it like being Filipino-American or Filipino in the punk scene in the US? That's why it's called *Pinoi Punk: Filipino Americans in Punk and Hardcore*.

Pinoi is a shortened word for Filipino. Signal 3, the first ever Filipino-American punk band that put out records, toured recently, and I played with them and I love them. They're a really good Oi! band and really nice guys and cool people and I hit up the drummer and asked him to give me some footage that I could digitize. $72 later I managed to get five hours of footage to pick through. I decided to put that in the documentary, along with the interviews. Ultimately, *Pinoi Punk* is about our connection to punk and our connection to each other.

MRR: Are you going to be screening it in the Philippines?
Yes. I'm going to do some more interviews as well, because over there they don't see color the same way. They're like "Oh, so you guys are Filipino and you play punk? That's no big deal." I just want to see what their opinion is of us doing this here, and what they have to go through to play punk there. So when I come back, I'll splice that in and then start planning screenings for the movie in its longer form.

MRR: You don't go back too often. Do you find you miss it?
Of course. I still have a lot of friends, a lot of family. But when you're here you can't really think about that. I was living in Oakland above members of the band Strychnine, and it was sort of a punk house with a bunch of writers and stuff, but I couldn't really think

about punk, because I couldn't find a place to eat sometimes. Hopping BART train gates and shit. Punk or the Philippines wasn't something I could think of. Now, because I work a corporate job, I'm able to do things like put out records and, you know, go to the Philippines.

MRR: It's like Robin Hood, steal from the rich...
Yeah, it's what you gotta do. I don't like my job but it's what I have to put up with. Next year I plan to do another Aklasan Fest, but invite bands like Namatay Sa Ingay and RHDP, interview them about their East Coast experience. There are so many Asian people on the West Coast, you don't really think about it. But when you're on the East Coast, it's very different. It's an older version of America, a much more rooted version of America, so I just want to see what their opinion is of that, maneuvering through that scene and their experiences.

MRR: That's quite inspiring, how you've dedicated yourself to this.
It's my friends, you know? And it all comes from that moment when you're like fifteen, and you're at a party and everybody's all thugged out and you've got a mohawk and you're thinking, "Fuck, why am I here? I don't have any friends." Because I always felt uncomfortable, even within the Filipino community—it's very small. There are not a lot of us. And not everyone in all the bands are Filipino, so we're not exactly just about race or anything. It's just the main theme I guess. We're Filipino, we're all immigrants, the people who are in the front mostly just kind of sing about their experiences, and these are our experiences. There's a band called Dog Breath from New York, and the singer is Filipino, and he sings about where he's coming from and that to me is Pinoi punk.

I don't feel good about charging money for stuff sometimes. With the label I try to make it as cheap as possible. I don't break even. I just want to get it out there, help my friends, help their name exist in people's minds, you know. Fortunately, everyone who's helping me on the film is doing it for free. I want to help out my friends, I want to help out different organizations. So we'll show it for that. In the South Bay, what will probably happen is, we'll show it as a benefit for the typhoon victims in the Philippines. So I hope that'll garner a lot of attention and help them out. That's what punk's supposed to be, helping other people.

MRR: I bet you could enter the documentary into independent film festivals.
I haven't actually thought about that yet. My wife is actually helping me with that because she's very on it, very cool, very progressive. She's an arts organizer, and she likes a lot of the bands that I like. Because I have to be focused on the creative side—what footage to put in, what to leave out, what kind of story to tell—she's going to take care of where we book it and stuff. It helps in partnerships like that, in a marriage where you do things together and include each other. She includes me in her art organizing, and she's a part of this.

MRR: What has been the involvement of women and queer people in the Pinoi punk scene?
That's one thing that I really regret, there weren't a lot of women in the documentary. In the early '80s scene there weren't a lot of women prominently involved, and zero queer folk, or out queer folk. Even in the documentary, that's one thing that we just don't have yet, diversity. We're not very big yet so we don't have a lot of people from the LGBTQ community. We only interviewed one woman, and in that sense it's very male. I wish it weren't, you know, but the reason why we have Aklasan Fest is to try to promote it and see who will be drawn to it and contribute to it. Hopefully in the future we'll get more.

It's more progressive now, and Philippine machismo is overwhelming, but it's not that overwhelming. And being queer is condemned and made fun of, but it's not violently attacked or anything. More women now are empowered, there are bands with female members, like Choke Cocoi. The two bands we're going to put out, Random Violence and Values Last are female-fronted. So women are definitely there and encouraged but it's not that big, compared to the pop music scene and the metal scene and the rock scene.

Philippine society is very patriarchal. It used to be matriarchal before the Spaniards came, is what they say. There was a group of women who were wise women called the Baybayin, and they guided the community and helped heal the community. And Catholicism came in and just put patriarchy in place. The reason we're called Filipinos is the whole country was named after King Phillip of Spain.

MRR: What was the name and religion before the colonizers?
It used to be a lot of different names before the Spaniards came, because it's an archipelago, so it's a lot of separate islands. And they didn't often communicate with each other. But I've heard it called Maharlikha. And the religion was animists. They had the universal kind of god thing, Bathala is what they called it, Lam Ang in other cultures. But it wasn't Catholicism, it was a matriarchal society from what I know, and they had reading and writing, and it was very much established already. They'd traded with Arabs, with Indians. The southern part was very Muslim, because of the Moors. They had rajahs, they had Muslim societies, and the north was animists, all people who worshipped a different kind of god.

MRR: Are there people who still uphold the old ways and reject Catholicism?
Very few. It's not very popular. They're more like hippies, not extremists or anything. There are still some tribesman in the north, like headhunters and stuff like that, but they're slowly fading away because their kids don't want to be part of that culture, they want to be industrialized. And because of climate change and what's happening to the environment, it's getting harder and harder to live in the northern parts in the rural areas. We just got hit with the strongest storm in recorded history last year and that devastated many of the central islands. It devastated a lot of the southern islands, rain for days, flooding. There's a lot of illegal logging in the Philippines and lot of pollution so whenever it rains there are flash floods, massive floods that are waist-high. So that culture is literally being eroded away by both technology and the weather. But people try to preserve it, it's just not as plentiful.

MRR: How do you feel about living here in the States?
I've had relatives and friends who went back and lived in the Philippines and they made sacrifices to live there, because they didn't like it here in the US anymore, they were tired of always going to work. Tired of feeling "different". To be honest, I'd rather be here than there. There I couldn't envision myself making a living at all. It would take a lot of help from family, which I'm not willing to ask, and it would take a lot of patience. Even going to work there, the day-in day-out of it there is that you sit through three hours of traffic going to work and coming home, because it's such a horrible driving system. That's just part of it. And when you go, you apply for jobs, and it's not the same where you're protected by certain rights. Over there, if you're too dark, if you're too short, too fat, from a certain region, if you have an accent, they won't accept you. If you're from a certain school that isn't deemed one of the top schools, you won't get accepted. So even people who work in fast food have college degrees. And places known as call centers—like when you call AT&T or credit card companies—it's mostly from the Philippines, because we have a good grasp of the language. I'll be on Facebook during my work

day talking to people and ask how come they're awake. And it's because they work for an American company and have to be awake when America is awake. That's a graveyard shift, that's a horrible shift. You don't get enough sleep. And they do it to put their kids through school, help their families and help themselves.

Yeah, this country is imperialistic, it's militaristic, it helps fuck over so many countries. And it's sad to say, but people who come here are afforded those same opportunities because it's imperialistic, because it's militaristic. I don't have an accent so they put me at the reception desk, but my coworkers who are Pilipino or Latino and have accents, they never get to sit up there, they will never get to sit up there. And they'll always classify it as "They don't sound professional," when it's really racist. They sound too Pilipino, too Latino. But Rupert sounds white, so put him there. The contrast is horrible, I hate that I have to accept that and work with douchey lawyers. I try to do things to balance it out. I help my wife with her work; I'm lucky she works with the community and doesn't have to deal with this shit. And she helps people. And I do the label, which I believe helps my friends and helps people in the Philippines. I did the film which I feel is helping preserve something.

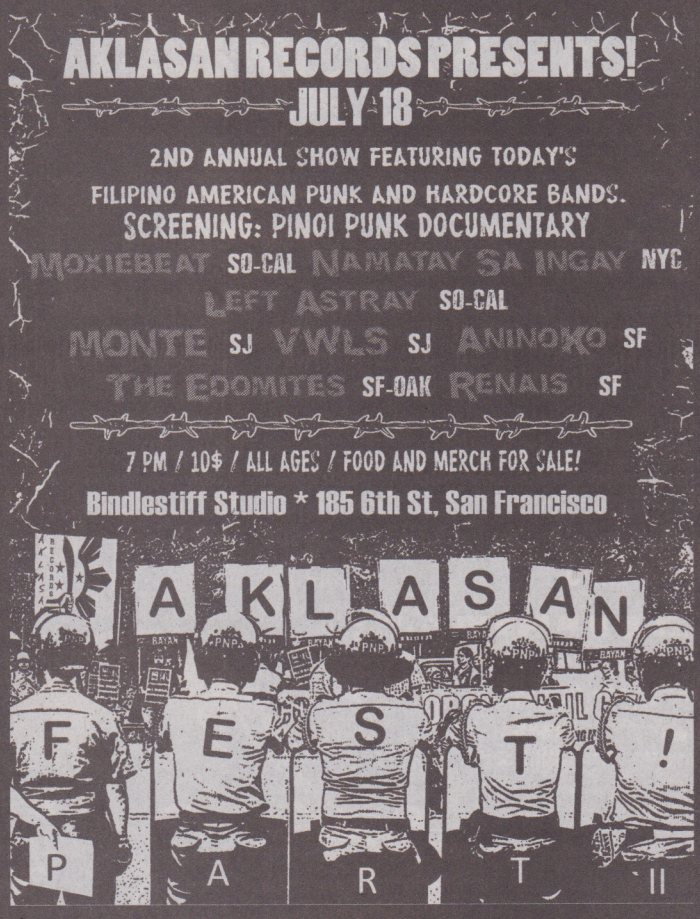
So it is a trip living here, because this is where money has to be made sometimes and this has pretty much been the go-to land of opportunity for many years for many people. Unless you're in another industry, in which case Singapore or China is your route. But for many people this is that place. I can't envision living anywhere else unless though. I've heard of white guys going to Japan and teaching English there, but it's not the same thing. It's about race too, because if you go to another country and you're obviously your typical American, you can kind of make a living teaching English and doing that kind of thing .If you're not stereotypically American you might not be able to do those things.

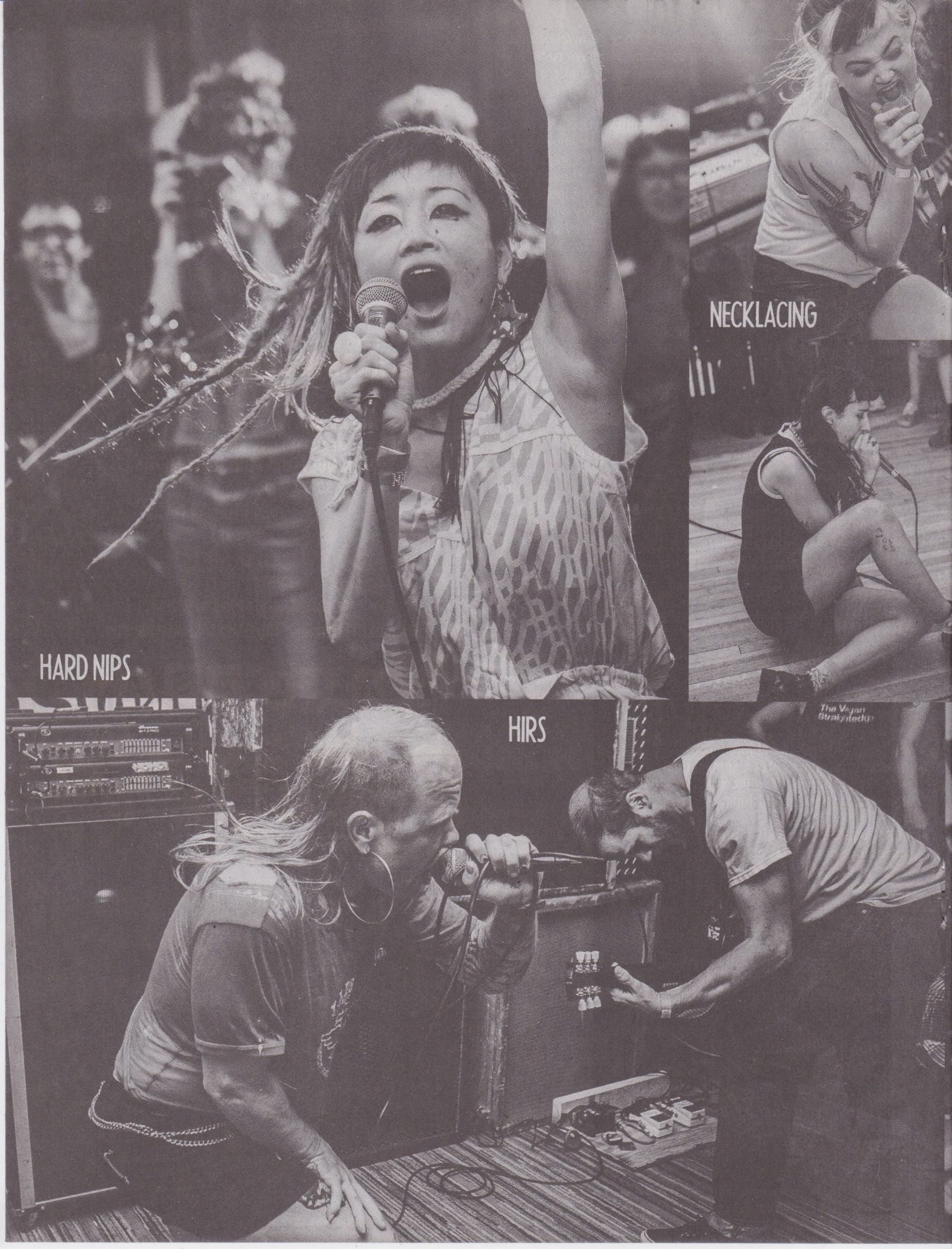
MRR: Are there other punks from other places interested in Pinoi punk?
A lot of Latino punks that I talk to, we connect on the same issues because it's very similar, what we're going through. In that sense, yeah, those are the folks whom I've kind of built relationships with over the years. Sit down, talk to, invite to different events, different educational discussions. I'm a part of a community group called San Francisco Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines and we will often have educational workshops and discussions about what's going on in the Philippines, why the Philippines is subject to imperialism, or why it's a semi-feudal, semi-colonial society. And we'll invite them and we'll connect on those issues because they're going through the same thing.

MRR: Aklasan Festival is almost upon us, the documentary is screening soon. What other projects are on the horizon?
We're putting out the VWLS cassette and the 7" split with Random Violence and Values Last from the Philippines. Two female-fronted straightedge hardcore bands. We're also going to put out a noise project by my friend, who's this weird, crazy noise dude who makes his own instruments. I don't really understand what it is, but it's crazy and it sounds heavy and weird. He's in a group called the Edomites which is just him with his makeshift instrument and a drummer. And then my own band, AninoKo, eventually, we'll put them out.

Stay up-to-date with Aklasan records at aklasanrecords.bigcartel.com and facebook.com/AklasanRecords.

Aklasan Fest: Part II Saturday, July 18, 7 p.m.
$10 at Bindlestiff Studio, 185 Sixth Street, San Francisco
Featuring Moxiebeat, Namatay Sa Ingay, Left Astray, Monte, VWLS, AninoKo, The Edomites, Renais, and a screening of the documentary Pinoy Punk.

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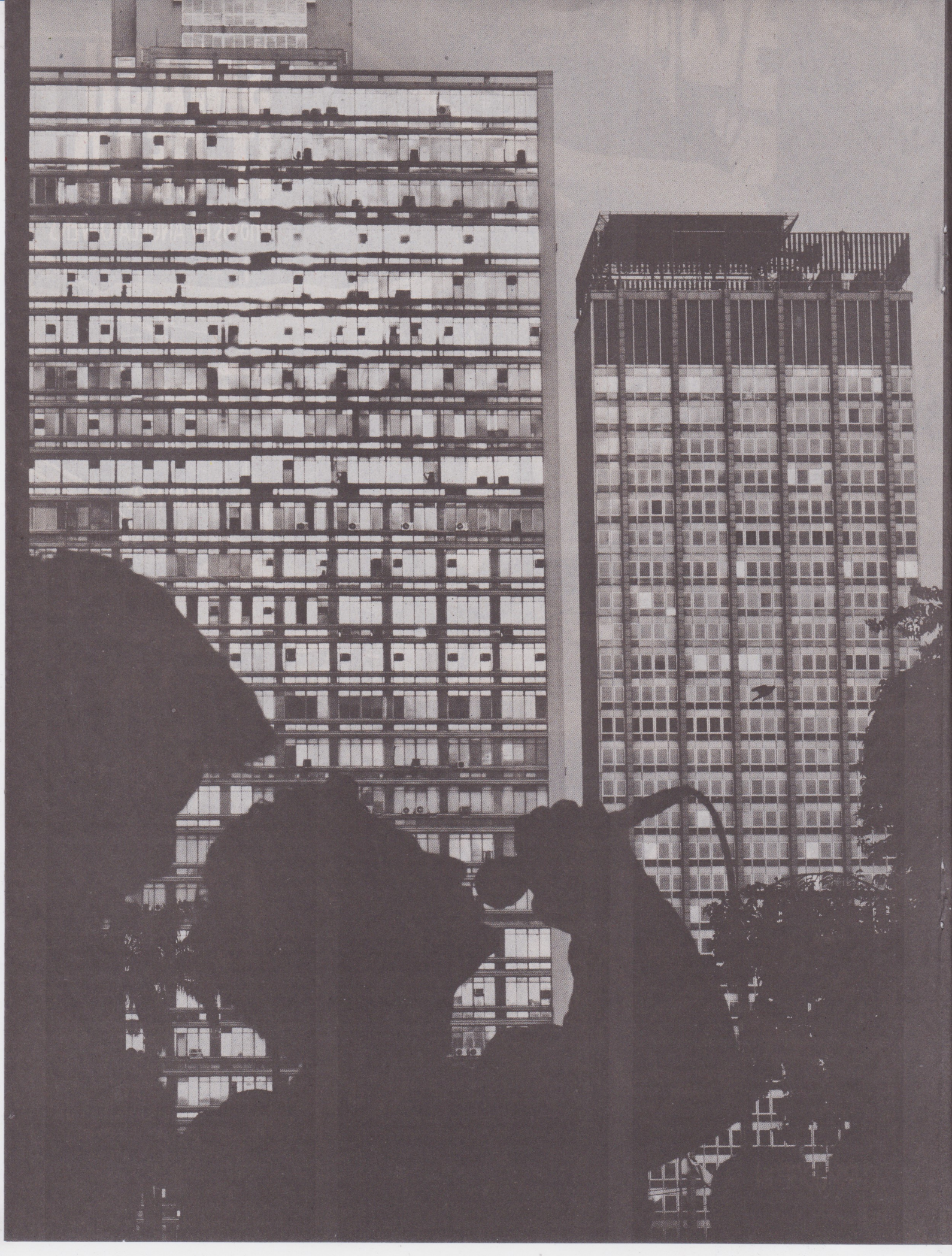

cadaver em transe

Introduction and interview by
Juliana Almeida

Photos provided by
Mateus Mondini

Cadaver em Transe comes from a concrete jungle called São Paulo, Brazil. I've known Pato (guitar), Alan (drums), Murilo (vocals) and Carla (bass, also in Rakta) for years and their musical projects always amaze me with their intensity and freshness while provoking a bitter aftertaste caused by having our chaotic reality smashed right into our face. They were supposed to be on a US tour during July and August but unfortunately the singer's visa was denied (#fucktheborders). They recently released a demo flexi and self-titled LP on Brazilian labels Nada Nada and Dama da Noite and will have a new 7" on Iron Lung Records this fall.

MRR: So tell me why and how the band started! I know some of you guys have a background in the punk and hardcore scene, so what made you start a more post-punk/death rock band?

PATO: The idea started during a trip, between me and Carla. We were talking about new paths in our lives, about going back home with new perspectives. Carla wanted to start playing and that was the beginning of it. It took us almost one year to start practicing. We invited Alan to play drums. Then, when we had some songs, we heard Murilo was looking for a band and then everything worked out. We practiced a few times and recorded a demo, which turned into our flexi record. About the music—I don't think the songs are too different from other stuff we have done before. Personally, I wanted to explore different things at that time—new guitar sounds, songs with layers, different atmospheres, that kind of thing. Also, I didn't want to create songs based on riffs or guitar melodies, so basically it was me and Carla playing. She would learn some riffs on the bass and we would start jamming based on that. Most songs were done based on bass and drums. About Murilo's singing, I don't think we can label it as post-punk, punk or hardcore. I don't know, I think it's something very personal, a very distorted thing in the band, that can't be labeled.

MRR: I don't even know if I can keep calling you guys post-punk/death rock; I think it fits way better for the beginning of the band. But years went by and, especially

on this new 7", I noticed the addition of a synth and a drum machine on some songs. They still sound like Cadaver em Transe songs though, which is something really cool to achieve. What was the reason or inspiration for this slight change?

PATO: I don't know if this can be considered a change. Maybe more a kind of evolution. On our LP there are already some elements like that—synths, percussion effects, samplers. We try to use everything we can to create a different atmosphere. We didn't want to sound "punk only" or "rock." We don't care about that. Our flexi sounds way more raw because it was a demo. Things were not exactly "ready" over there, we still wanted to explore more, and that's why we re-recorded some of those songs for the LP. The new 7" has songs that sound more like this, with strong synth effects and a drum machine. They all were based on a project that Douglas from Deaf Kids and I are working on. While Carla was touring with Rakta, we started to practice here at home, and many new ideas came up and turned into Cadaver em Transe's songs. We mixed electronic elements with an organic background, like having real people playing instruments live, not just computers.

CARLA: Yea, I don't think it was a change. It was just a matter of time. I never wanted to be stuck in one music style. The idea was always to freely develop and explore sounds, according to what we wanted.

MRR: I know most members are not from São Paulo, even though the band started there. Is that a coincidence? What impact do you guys think São Paulo has had over your sound or lyrics? How do you like São Paulo nowadays? Has your opinion about the city changed the older you get?

CARLA: The older I get, the more I realize the impact this town has over me. Anxiety and distress take over us. It seems time goes by faster and faster and people pile up on top of each other, living in shaky conditions. I see more and more people with mental issues on the streets. I believe if I didn't live in São Paulo, I wouldn't play in Cadaver em Transe. In my opinion, our sound is a perfect mirror of this town. The biggest inspiration.

PATO: São Paulo is the biggest town in Brazil and one of the biggest in the world. Most people involved in the punk scene are not from here, so I don't think it's a coincidence that we play together. Our paths just ended up crossing because we all hang out in the same spots. São Paulo has more than 20 million people, if you count all of the metropolitan area, and it's the town with the highest rates of mental illness in the world. According to last year's census, one-third of the population have some kind of mental illness with anxiety or panic disorders considered the least serious. It's by far the most fascist town in Brazil. There is definitely a lot of critical thinking as well—demonstrations against all this are also huge here. In the end, this town is a concrete giant, walking and smashing everyone. Some people are smashed, some people get together to try to be part of this structure, some people manage to escape, trying to find a different path to survive. There's also the problem of how information flows nowadays. Sometimes you don't know who is who. So I think the structure of how things work has a deep impact in our personal or social life, especially in my case, since I came from the countryside: Actually, I was raised in an industrial town between rural and urban areas. So the way we create the songs, the way Murilo adds the lyrics, the way

he sings about it—and he used to live right in São Paulo downtown when we started the band—translates all this. All the noise, the repetitiveness, the constant crowds, the noise, the dirt, the lack of space—they're all probably great influences on how we sound.

MRR: Not sure if you guys feel the same, but I believe a really cool thing about punk is how it can praise self-destruction and at the same time give us hope and a kind of strength to stay alive. Bands get different messages, sometimes the same band get different messages, but no matter what they are, it's always a positive impact among kids. Do you guys relate to that?

CARLA: Since we lost all hope related to our daily lives, maybe imagining the destruction of all these imposed values can transform distress into a positive feeling towards the future.

PATO: Punk for me is more a life method, a practical method of doing things. A practical philosophy. The capacity of saying "no" to some stuff, being always willing to learn how to do things by yourself or with friends. Besides that, nowadays, most social (and antisocial) obligations to live or be part of this micro-society called punk kind of make me tired. I think communication overshadows the personal connections, especially in an environment where you have to be careful. So I can't understand how learning through punk works nowadays for younger people, like how you can find, or at least think you found, an explanation for everything in minutes. I think this is creating a competition, an invisible cold war, especially in places like São Paulo. Imagine 20 million people struggling through opportunities in their daily lives. Sometimes I think connections are only based in self-promotion. It seems that the way people want to be noticed or have their opinion noticed is by taking over real personal connections. Everything is superficial and terribly vain. It's more important to show you know something than learning. Everything is so self-opinionated and so self-righteous, but has so little value. But I try not to overthink it. I'm always more focused on my own things, and on things with people who like to be out of this box, like doing stuff with their own hands and their own heads, and less with their mouths. I try not to think too much about hope cause even though I don't consider myself a negative person, I don't want to get crazy trying to find a drop of hope in this collapsing world. I'd rather keep working on things right here, right now and keep my feet on the ground. Even if that hurts more. And at this moment, music gets into and completes me.

MRR: From reading interviews, and also because I know you guys, I feel there's a really solid idea in the band about not getting stuck in a certain kind of sound and always being willing to jam with different people and create projects, like Dub Cavera and Rakta em Transe. Can you tell us a bit more about that?

PATO: This is one of the coolest things that Cadaver makes us feel. As I said before, we never wanted to be attached to a specific structure or style. We also don't want to sound super original or anything like that. The point is to be open to things that can add and reproduce what is in my head while I'm writing a song or practicing. This is a reflex of our network of friends, a lot of people thinking the same way, at the same time. Two years ago, we had this show with a band called Dub Cavera, two friends of ours who play a more noise/experimental and deconstructed music. We had the two bands playing at the same time. There was also a short Dub project between me and Carla called Lacuna, where we did a version of one of our songs. And then there was Rakta em Transe, because both bands are so close to each other. Rakta and Cadaver were always sister bands, trying to do things the same way, but each one with their own message and their own aesthetics, while walking towards the same direction. So last year we got together and wrote four songs, as one band. It had six or seven people involved, doing everything. Turned out, we recorded a 7" that will be out soon as well. Everything is part of a structure that we create and flows by itself. We dedicate most time, maybe all our time, to things like that. It's so cool when there are people doing the same things and these things flow together, completing each other. This band is the four of us, but having more people going the same way, crossing our paths, brings out more dynamics and different influences.

CARLA: One of the richest things we can live in life is sharing moments with others. When you play with someone, it's like talking in a different language. The only problem is that people see each other less and less in São Paulo because everyone is far from each other, plus lack of time and all the other problems in big cities.

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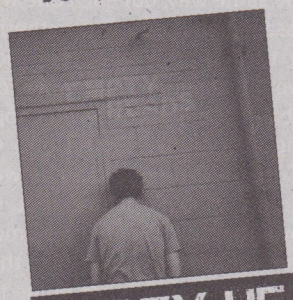

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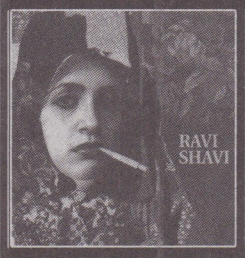

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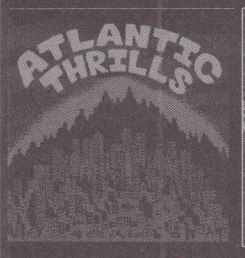

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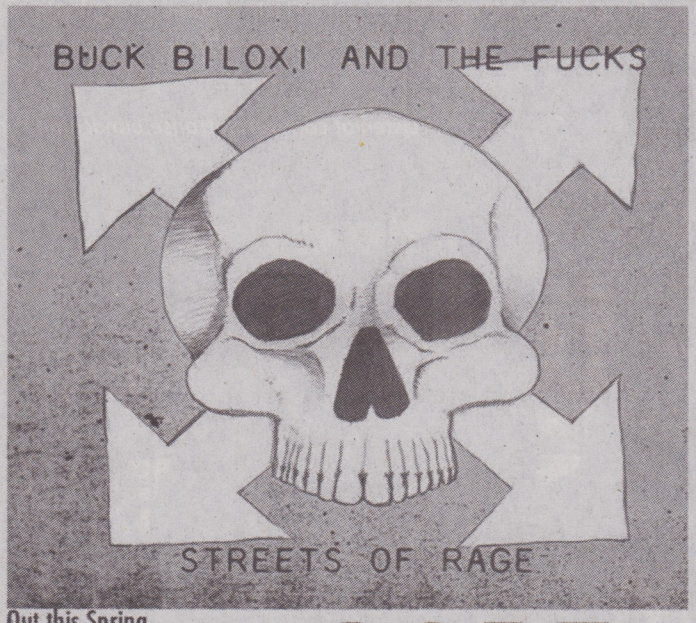
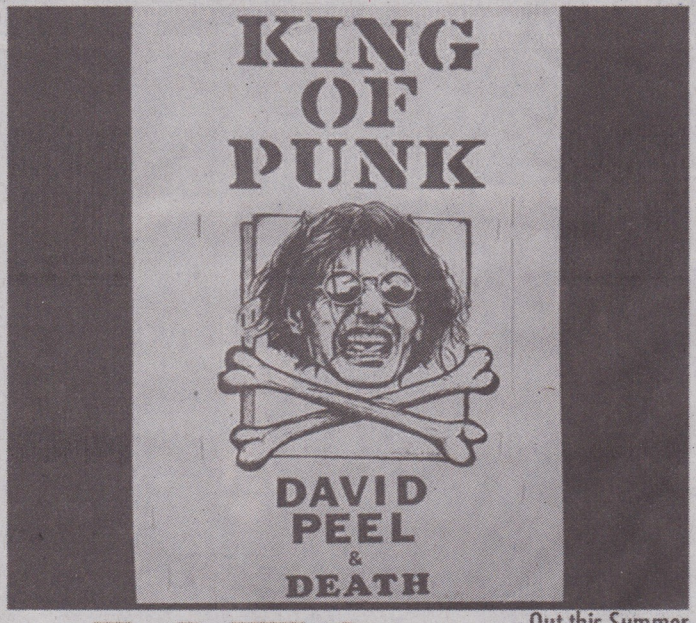


Out this Spring



Out this Summer

2015 / 1978

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Data Control

Stockholm, Sweden's Data Control formed from the ashes of Negative Lifestyle during the winter months that bled from 2012 to 2013. Mixing caffeinated early hardcore and the later melodic side of Hüsker Dü (the band for which they are named), while adding in some Scandinavian bleakness with touches of garage punk, Data Control's songs achieve something more realized and focused than their previous bands' efforts. Track down their 7" and tapes, and eagerly await their debut LP available this summer on Farsot / Den Magiska Cirkeln. Interview by Fredrik Kullman, translation and introduction by Joe Sutton.

Anders: guitar, vocals

Daniel: bass, backing vocals

Danya: drums

MRR: You're called Data Control and have Facebook and Bandcamp accounts. What do you think of the technical development of the internet (I know it's 2015 now) for hardcore bands around the world, and what would your "career" with Data Control look like if the internet did not exist?

Anders: The network we've built after all these years within punk and hardcore circuits has only gotten bigger, certainly thanks to the internet explosion. We particularly have the old (now defunct) Myspace page to thank for it. We jumped on there and made a lot of new contacts in terms of new bands, venues, and distros. We also reestablished contacts with a lot of old people who were and are active in the scene, like people we met at festivals and gigs around the country, or people who we just bought, sold, or swapped vinyl, tapes, and fanzines with. Then there was and still is something called Soulseek, which was probably the first file sharing service that I really loved. I could do a simple search and find bootlegs and rehearsal recordings of my favorite bands. It really was like discovering a new world again, and you didn't have to send a lot of nagging letters and blank tapes for people to fill, ha! It's all more direct now, and it means less time spent promoting the band, and more time spent on making music instead. You can put on a gig with very short notice and people will find out and show up. Going to nearby towns and suburbs with homemade flyers about gigs and releases is still important, but not all people will see them. We want our music to be available for everybody, so we have a Bandcamp site where all our music can found, though I do prefer to have the physical form of a record/tape/flexi or whatever format it is made on. I am a sick record collector!

Daniel: It's quite amazing that people in Indonesia found our music through the internet and then spread our songs there on cassette. We've hardly had any contact with people in Indonesia by letter or telephone! I also think it is cool that our music is available to download or stream for everyone who wants to hear it. Music is so much more accessible these days.

MRR: Data Control is named after a song by Hüsker Dü, and I think you sound a lot like them. What is your relationship to that band?

Anders: Hüsker Dü is probably the band that I have listened to the most. I can constantly find new nuances in their songs, and there is everything from fast straightforward hardcore songs to more complex pop songs, as well as really good and varied lyrics. When I started listening to Hüsker Dü, the punk and hardcore scene was full of boring macho hardcore like Refused and Snapcase and melodic USHC that bored me so much that I almost stopped listening to punk for a while. Everything sounded so sterile and dead, and it felt as if their aim was to play as musically advanced as they could. The music seemed

to have such a clinical sound with snappy snare drums and guitars that sounded heavy metal instead of jangly (which I like). Everything was so tight that one would think that the whole thing was created by machines. In Hüsker Dü I found warmth and directness. I think that we in Data Control, like Hüsker Dü, have had difficulties fitting into any one scene. People probably think that our music is too wimpy to be placed into the hardcore genre. At the same time it is too messy or hard to put an indie or pop stamp on it. This can be a disadvantage when trying to get gigs, but at the same time, it's so much more fun to not be bound to any genre.

Danya: Hüsker Dü and the Wipers are my two favorite bands. I have a "Sorry Somehow" tattoo on my wrists. The first time I met Anders was at a gig at Grundbulten in Stockholm for a Russian band called Richochet. I was dead drunk and saw a guy wearing a Hüsker Dü t-shirt, so I immediately went up to talk to him. I said that he was the best guy in the world that had the shirt and a bunch of other crap. Anders likely thought that I was an idiot.

Daniel: It was Anders who introduced me to Hüsker Dü, actually. It was certainly ten years ago. I think that almost everything we've done in various bands has been influenced by them in a way. Too bad we'll never get to see them live! I saw Bob Mould two years ago. I was glad he played a bunch of their songs, but it's not the same.

MRR: How would you describe the Swedish punk and hardcore scene? Which cities are the most active these days?

Anders: It feels like Sweden is full of great bands at the moment. Not just punk and hardcore bands, but also a lot of great new indie and rock bands. Sippinkollektivet and Push My Buttons are booking shows here in Stockholm for alternative bands. Malmo, Gothenburg, Uppsala, Stockholm, and Umeå are full of life when it comes to live gigs and bands. As usual a lot of great bands come from small towns and villages, but the shows are mainly held in the bigger cities.

Daniel: The scene in Sweden does feel pretty good right now. Gaphals in Linkoping are booking live gigs as well as putting out some good records. It is always fun to go there. Things are happening in Häggebäcken outside Sala as well, so it's not just in the bigger cities.

MRR: What other Swedish bands would you recommend?

Anders: There are a lot of great bands right now, like Red Doves, Liv Slakt & Maskin, Sista Bussen, Neu Ronz, and Pusrad, to name a few. I'm so sick and tired of so much of new hardcore music, frontpeople going back and forth on stage complaining about this and that. Sure, punk and hardcore have always has naive lyrics, but it's this new music that I find totally dead. There is too much metal in it, in the same way that many bands in the early '90s sounded tight and sterile. There's too little traditional rock'n'roll and psychedelic elements in this new music. Everything is according to a template. I won't name names, though. It's better that way.

Daniel: Fukushima from Umeå and Slöa Knivar from Malmö are two favorite bands. We released a split tape with Snake from Stockholm. They're really good too!

MRR: Your drummer is from Russia. How's life as a hardcore drummer in Sweden compared to life as hardcore drummer in Russia?

Danya: In Russia, you would probably not have enough money to get your own place for rehearsals, so you'd have to spend over $15 each week to rent a rehearsal room for six hours. There aren't many good drummers in St. Petersburg. There are only three or four drummers who can play a D-beat. The lack of drummers makes you the most valuable person in the punk scene of your town! When I'm in Russia, I play in five bands at the same time.

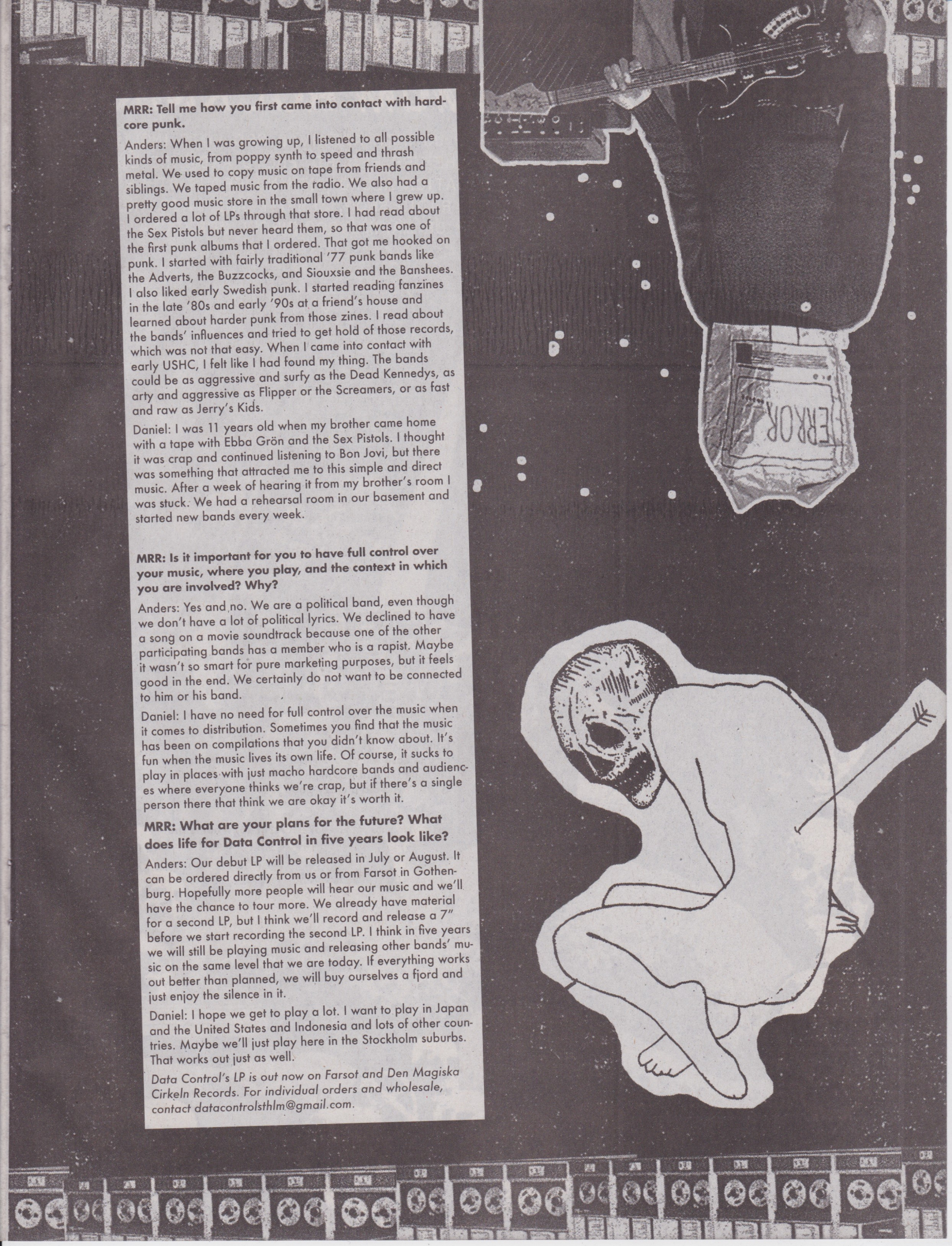
MRR: Signaler Från Ovan put out your first 7". Who's putting out the next one?

Anders: We just released a split tape with the Swedish band Snake, though I think that it is out of stock now. Our next release will be a full-length LP. I'm really happy with the sound of it. It was mixed and mastered by Fredrik Lyxzén, who did a crazy good job.

MRR: Are you record collectors? If so, what is the most expensive album you've ever bought? The best bargain?

Daniel: I absolutely like to buy records, but I do it without thinking what the records are worth or what pressing they are. I would definitely choose a first press over a reissue, but I will not throw out a lot of money on it. I did find the Rude Kids LP for 40 SEK. It's probably my best bargain. Not so much for the value, but because I love Rude Kids! I also got an unrecorded copy of the DT and the Stoodes LP for free from a friend who knew Torkel from the orchestra.

Anders: I collect records and buy far too many records, including expensive ones. One of my better finds is Harvester *Hemåt*. It was $1 at a local flea market. The vinyl was in mint condition. I won a Hüsker Dü *Zen Arcade* promo LP the other day for around $31, which I think is a bargain. There are 500 copies and it has eight songs, seven of which are included on the LP. The extra song is a cover that is not included on the LP. The b-side has the Hüsker Dü logo etched.



MRR: Tell me how you first came into contact with hardcore punk.

Anders: When I was growing up, I listened to all possible kinds of music, from poppy synth to speed and thrash metal. We used to copy music on tape from friends and siblings. We taped music from the radio. We also had a pretty good music store in the small town where I grew up. I ordered a lot of LPs through that store. I had read about the Sex Pistols but never heard them, so that was one of the first punk albums that I ordered. That got me hooked on punk. I started with fairly traditional '77 punk bands like the Adverts, the Buzzcocks, and Siouxsie and the Banshees. I also liked early Swedish punk. I started reading fanzines in the late '80s and early '90s at a friend's house and learned about harder punk from those zines. I read about the bands' influences and tried to get hold of those records, which was not that easy. When I came into contact with early USHC, I felt like I had found my thing. The bands could be as aggressive and surfy as the Dead Kennedys, as arty and aggressive as Flipper or the Screamers, or as fast and raw as Jerry's Kids.

Daniel: I was 11 years old when my brother came home with a tape with Ebba Grön and the Sex Pistols. I thought it was crap and continued listening to Bon Jovi, but there was something that attracted me to this simple and direct music. After a week of hearing it from my brother's room I was stuck. We had a rehearsal room in our basement and started new bands every week.

MRR: Is it important for you to have full control over your music, where you play, and the context in which you are involved? Why?

Anders: Yes and no. We are a political band, even though we don't have a lot of political lyrics. We declined to have a song on a movie soundtrack because one of the other participating bands has a member who is a rapist. Maybe it wasn't so smart for pure marketing purposes, but it feels good in the end. We certainly do not want to be connected to him or his band.

Daniel: I have no need for full control over the music when it comes to distribution. Sometimes you find that the music has been on compilations that you didn't know about. It's fun when the music lives its own life. Of course, it sucks to play in places with just macho hardcore bands and audiences where everyone thinks we're crap, but if there's a single person there that think we are okay it's worth it.

MRR: What are your plans for the future? What does life for Data Control in five years look like?

Anders: Our debut LP will be released in July or August. It can be ordered directly from us or from Farsot in Gothenburg. Hopefully more people will hear our music and we'll have the chance to tour more. We already have material for a second LP, but I think we'll record and release a 7" before we start recording the second LP. I think in five years we will still be playing music and releasing other bands' music on the same level that we are today. If everything works out better than planned, we will buy ourselves a fjord and just enjoy the silence in it.

Daniel: I hope we get to play a lot. I want to play in Japan and the United States and Indonesia and lots of other countries. Maybe we'll just play here in the Stockholm suburbs. That works out just as well.

Data Control's LP is out now on Farsot and Den Magiska Cirkeln Records. For individual orders and wholesale, contact datacontrolsthlm@gmail.com.

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Punk isn't a subculture that was designed for people to get old in. The problem is, when you grow up in punk, and you believe in what it provides you, the cheap compromises of adulthood may not offer much to look forward to. Spending your days doing something fundamentally useless in order to make money to pay for increasingly fancy drinks that numb the futility of your life may not feel like an admirable goal. Owning a house, or two (and being a landlord!), may not seem like something to aspire desperately to. Introducing new human beings to a bleak and meaningless world may not strike you and your partner like a great or ethical idea. OK, fine. This all seems manageable enough in your twenties.

Maybe you roll over into your thirties still feeling optimistic about having a decent and rewarding future, regardless of the fact that you still spend most days feeling like you fit in nowhere in the adult world—the same reason you got into punk in the first place. But now you're actually old—you go to shows and can't help but notice most people are a decade younger, if not more. They're working through the issues and problems that punk exists to address, but as much as you respect those challenges and are grateful that punk is there to help support younger folks facing them now, you find it hard to relate to people dealing with questions you resolved in your own life back in, let's say, the '90s.

Meanwhile, people your age keep having children they expect you to want to hold for some reason and some of your friends have had careers for years now. Others have gone down the long and ugly road of slow-motion self-destruction, which it turns out can take far longer than we expected when we were young, and just gets sadder and sadder. More than even when you were a teenage weirdo, a lot of people your own age seem to have increasingly perverse and indecipherable priorities. Over time, the older you get, taking stock of the wins and losses to date becomes a more and more dangerous proposition. Eventually, if you don't kill yourself, "no future" becomes the future, and it's rarely very pretty.

If any of this feels familiar, then perhaps you should get to know the Victim Party. The six-piece Toronto band's members are old enough to come from a tradition of pop punk as a style of music that belonged to weirdos and fuckups and losers, rather than fratboys, x-treme sports bros, and food-court skate kids. The obvious sonic counterpoint for the band—which has two alternating singers, Colin (ex-Marilyn's Vitamins and Hostage Life) and Tabi (ex-the Ward), the latter more melodic and the former more gruff—is Cleveland Bound Death Sentence. Other clear points of reference are Dillinger Four, Jawbreaker, and Leatherface. If you prefer more recent comparisons, they'd be at home on a bill with Dirty Marquee, Rumspringer, The Ergs!, and the Marked Men.

Or they would have been, if they hadn't broken up almost immediately after making their finest record—which was first released as a graphic novel that came with a download code for a nine-song album. Now that record, Getting To Know The Victim Party, is getting the quality vinyl release it always deserved from Toronto's well-respected Ugly Pop Records (whose second release, back in 1998, was a Marilyn's Vitamins 7").

Getting To Know The Victim Party combines driving melody, insistent hooks, and vocals that alternate between sweet, plaintive, hoarse, and anthemic. The songs are upbeat and tuneful as an ironic counterpoint to lyrics that explore the unrelenting bleakness of growing old in punk, struggling with addiction, and assessing the damage the world has done to you—and you've done to yourself and the world. It's catchy enough that you can play it over and over without getting tired of it, except doing that means asking a lot of pretty dark questions that you might have been trying to avoid asking yourself.

I spoke to Colin and Tabi about the record, which also featured Dean (guitar), Kyle (drums), Matt (bass), and Patrick (guitar). Interview and introduction by Jesse Staniforth. Photos provided by Stephen McGill.

THE VICTIM PARTY

MRR: Is it safe to assume that one of the guiding themes of this record is the difficulty of getting older in punk, a subculture that celebrates losers and struggle but doesn't offer its members much preparation for life after 30?
Colin: 100%. When I starting working on the lyrics for the songs, and the subsequent art and text for the comic, I was asking myself, "OK, what the fuck am I actually doing with my life? I've got this beer league band. I get wasted every weekend. I'm a receptionist at a vet clinic, with a bachelor's degree in English. Where did I go wrong? How do I make the next step? What is the next step?" And this line of questioning always led me to two of the other big themes on the record: a sense of failure born from depression, and chemical dependency. The whole time I was working on my portion of the album I was severely depressed, struggling with generalized anxiety disorder [and] mild agoraphobia, and self-medicating with drugs and alcohol. I had no idea how to take care of myself. I had no idea how to be an adult.
Tabi: The feeling of being trapped in a subculture that is "forever young" or rather "forever immature" is definitely represented in the story. The inability to escape habits that were fine as a youth but unmanageable in the long term comes up throughout it, although the ages of [song subjects and graphic novel characters] Bear and Chimp are never exclusively mentioned, the reader gets a sense of how old they might be based on their lifestyles and interactions with each other and the other characters in the book.

MRR: The record and comic book that came with it are both called *Getting To Know The Victim Party*. What should a person Getting To Know The Victim Party expect?
Tabi: When we started writing the record it was supposed to be more lighthearted and downright funny, but as we went along it became increasingly clear that a lot of our humour is self-deprecating and that we all tend to laugh at the difficult and sad things in our lives. Hence what started out to be an inside joke got pretty dark pretty quickly, and took on a life of its own as far as the mood of the record goes. I guess a person Getting To Know The Victim Party should expect to see some of the dark things in themselves reflected in the members of the band. I like to think that a lot of the record is really relatable to most people ([if they] take the time to read the lyrics and the book).
Colin: On the surface, we're friendly party animals that love catchy pop punk. Underneath we have a lot of problems. Scary problems.

MRR: A lot of this record—and comic—seems to be dealing with issues of addiction, alcoholism, and pretty substantial failure. Are there any positive conclusions to those things, or is this mostly a cry of defeat?
Tabi: Personally, I see some great positive conclusions! While the majority of the record/comic is very heavy and addresses addiction and failure very frankly, I see silver linings in a few songs as well as the conclusion of the book. There are lines in "Matt Woo (And You Can Too)" (the second verse, "I won't wait here very long for someone else to come around and ask me to dance again / and there's a new disaster every day / bully in my face but I always deflect them when I can / baby, I was born to be unafraid") and "Weekend At Kyle's" ("Throw at me what you will, I'm not dead yet"). There are a few other examples as far as lyrics go but also the end of the book (while open to interpretation) can be taken in a positive light. (Spoiler alert!) The two characters see that their relationship is not a healthy one and that life cannot go on as they have been living it. They make the choice to change. That is a positive thing to me.
Colin: Definitely, the cry of defeat. It's the last big weekend for the consummate party animal turned hopeless addict. He's either going to finally recapture that euphoric sense of inebriated wonder that he felt in his teens, or he's going to drink himself into oblivion and die alone, most likely at his own hand. That's where my head was when I was writing a lot of the lyrics. I fucking hated myself, and didn't know how I could get through another week. I had no idea how to make myself happy. So I drank, or got high, which is a classic coping tool for people with mental health issues which go unaddressed. You're depressed, so you drink. You're anxious, so you drink.

At first it's great, but as my song "An Evening with Colin" shows, it can all turn dark and angry really, really fast. No one ever solved his or her problems with one more pint. One more key bump. One more joint.

MRR: "An Evening with Colin" seems to lay out questionable arguments for being a self-destructive (and generally destructive) alcoholic. Should the listener buy these arguments, hate them, or hear them some other way?
Tabi: I really don't see it as an argument for being this way so much as the internal struggle of someone who *is* this way. The entire song is told from the first person POV and the protagonist goes back and forth between two personalities the whole time, struggling to be "good" but then not being able to control sliding into the aggressive and unreasonable.

MRR: "Weekend at Kyle's" is about role-playing games, a subject that's also explored in the comic. What makes that kind of gaming important to the overall themes of the record, about enduring struggle and feeling increasing loss and alienation?
Tabi: We wrote this song in the early stages of getting this record together and almost everyone in the band at the time was playing D&D so we thought this would be a funny thing to include in a record that

was about the royal "us." As the lyrics developed, it ended up also taking more of a heavy turn as we started looking at why we all enjoy playing a game where we don't have to be the royal "us."

Colin: We wanted to incorporate the role-playing theme into the album and book, because we didn't want to portray ourselves as one-dimensional beings. It's explored further in "You're Great, I'm Dean Richards," as the lyrics to that song are about Dean trying to juggle his life as a professional teacher with his punk rock band life. At work, Dean wears a different face than he does on Friday night at [Toronto punk bar] The Bovine. Not to get too pedantic, but I was trying to explore Jung's theory of the persona, but in the context of a band. We portrayed ourselves as carefree drunks on stage, just there to have fun. Our band motto [which appeared on Victim Party t-shirts] was "None of this matters." It was all shits and giggles, but the reality was, we worked hard at writing songs, and the partying aspect, for me at least, was not a jovial thing; it was dark and problematic. The final extension of this duality is in the music itself. We're talking about some depressing shit, with some really bouncy happy songs. It's so ridiculous.

MRR: "Tabi Irani, Tragically Fascist or Fascistically Tragic" has the chorus of "You're going to lose something someday / oh, won't we all." Do you have any sense of how any one of us should deal with that inevitable loss when it happens? Is there any solution implied in the record or comic?

Tabi: I think the line you quoted answers this question: "Oh, won't we all." Knowing that you aren't alone in your loss is a big part of dealing with it. Everyone loses things that are (the most) important to them. The solution is said later in the song, "Don't give up when you don't win." As much as this record is mired in sadness, hopelessness, and pain, it is moments like "Don't give up when you don't win" that give it that positive conclusion I was talking about earlier.

Colin: I actually think the solution is implied within the song. The lyrics to the bridge are far less bleak. ("Please, please, please, don't say you're sorry again / and please, please, please don't give up, when you don't win.") It's actually one of the more positive moments on the album. It acknowledges the universal truth that, yes, you're going to lose something or someone you love during your lifetime; loss is a massive part of the human condition, but perseverance is another part. Pushing through when everything is at its darkest.

Of course, you can also read it as having an undercurrent of self-hatred—as though we're saying to ourselves, "Quit whining you babies, this pain doesn't make you special."

MRR: "Adam Cook, Extinguished Gentleman" seems to look back on the youthful ideals of a 22-year-old punk with a kind of painful nostalgia brought about by the toll of holding onto what you believe in year after year. Is there some middle ground there, or do you think that it's impossible to believe in things without them causing you increasing pain with age?

Colin: That particular song is more about the idea of being told when you're young that you have so much potential, and then being told when you're older that you're not living up to it. It's about being told, in a backhanded fashion, that you're a failure for choosing to play in bands, rather than pursue a lucrative career, etc. Along with that that comes the questioning of your youthful punk ideals. And yes, I do think there is a middle ground. You can definitely look back at what you used to feel so passionately about as a youth, and not be completely embarrassed by your actions (even if they were silly, misinformed lyrics to songs that now make you cringe). It's part of aging. To put an appropriate cliché

...LOSS IS A MASSIVE PART OF THE HUMAN CONDITION BUT PERSEVERANCE IS ANOTHER PART...

on it—you live and you learn. Finding out that the world isn't as black and white and as us vs. them is a triumph in my mind.

MRR: Before its vinyl rerelease by Ugly Pop Records, the album was originally released as a graphic novel (billed as "a graphic rock and roll album") that came with a download code for the songs. Why did you decide to release the record that way?

Tabi: Since I have significantly fewer releases than the majority of the band members, for me releasing as many different mediums as possible was important. We had done a 12" and a 7". I had done a four-song CD demo with my other band [The Ward]. We toyed with the idea of a 10" EP release (especially before "Matt Woo" was added to the roster and before we had the opening and closing songs, when it was just six songs) but since Colin and I are really into graphic novels, it just seemed to make sense to release it this way. I always considered us a "project" band. All our releases started out as a neat idea (or even just a funny line) that we liked and fleshed out. To that end, I feel like *Getting To Know The Victim Party* is the best example of what we do best.

Colin: When we first came up with the idea for *Getting To Know The Victim Party*, we were excited about it because it was a challenge in terms of writing songs specific to members of the band. It was, as far as we knew, a pretty unique idea. We were also aware that it was kind of silly as well, which made it even more appealing. We liked the challenge it presented, and as far as we knew, no one had ever released an album as a graphic novel. As far as making it a comic, that had a lot to do with me, I'm a huge alternative and underground comic nerd, and writing and drawing a graphic novel had always been a personal goal of mine. So this seemed like a good opportunity to achieve that goal. It was difficult, time consuming, and infuriating, but something I'm really proud of having followed through with.

MRR: The comic features mainly features two characters: a bear and a chimpanzee. Readers are encouraged to understand these two figures as representative of a band that has six members. How does that work? Are Bear and Chimp more representative of some members than others? And why a bear and chimp instead of, say, a badger and Gila monster?

Tabi: This goes back to my earlier response about every song chapter being relatable to most everyone. While each song/chapter features themes that are heavily influenced by individual members, they are also representative of all of us.

Colin: Choosing to represent the band with only two characters was a logistical decision. There were six people in The Victim Party, seven if you include former members. Cramming all those bodies into a story, not to mention a four-panel page, just seemed too messy. It would be easier on the reader, and, let's not bullshit, me, the artist, to trim that seven down to two. It allowed for a more accessible story arc as well. As for why a Bear and why a Chimpanzee…those are the two animals I like drawing. It was always going to be a mixed species couple because this is the cartoon world, dogs can marry cats, etc.

MRR: The recurring subject of the comic is of the incredibly self-destructive and addictive relationship between Bear and Chimp, who love one another but can't seem to keep from hurting each other and others. How should we read that as descriptive of the band itself? How much of the individual relationships in the band are reflected here?

Tabi: The relationship between Bear and Chimp is similar to that of any band or any couple. There is real camaraderie and love together but it's also a dependence on each other and when that co-dependence turns into a reason that you can't fulfil personal goals, it's difficult to maintain in a healthy way. While we didn't go into it to create a literal comparison, events definitely arose along the way that made it more and more personal.

Colin: In each chapter Bear and Chimp are intended to possess the character traits of one band member more than another, but it's pretty obvious, if you know us personally, that Bear and Chimp are mostly representative of Tabi and myself. [Tabi and Colin were married at the time the album was first released.] Like Bear and Chimp, we had a very destructive relationship. Passionate and crazy, but definitely unhealthy. When the book was released, a few friends approached different members of the band concerned that we would be getting a divorce…the answer turned out to be yes.

Having acknowledged that, the relationship between Bear and Chimp is not that dissimilar from that of a band. There is always friction in a band. Here you have a group of people working toward a common purpose, something they love to do, yet there is always strife in a band room. Disagreements about songs, shows, scheduling, etc., are bound to emerge. There will be dizzying, almost euphoric highs when you're clicking and everything is sounding and going well. But for all the fun a band can have, and be, it can also be a very toxic relationship. Egos and attitudes are going to surface, and the partying is always fun at the beginning, but when the partying becomes the focal point, like it did for me, a band can be very destructive.

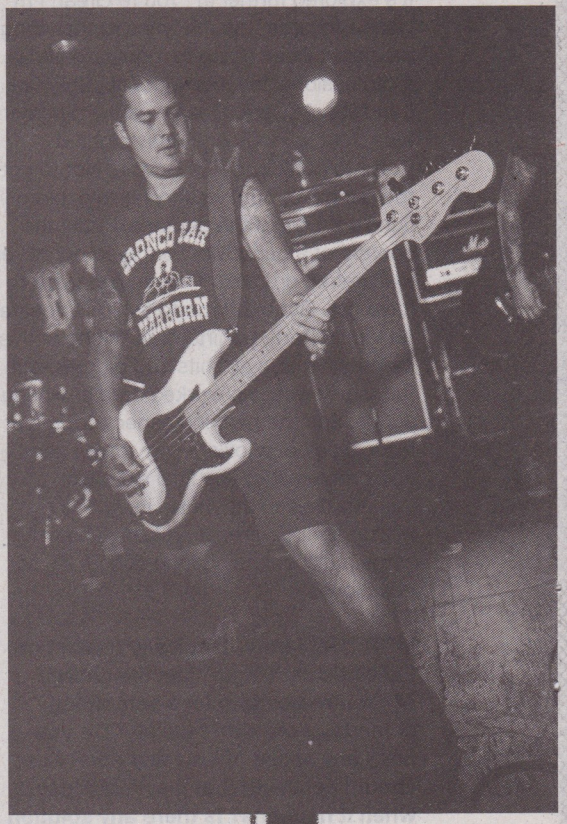
MRR: What do Bear and Chimp need to be happy and sane? What does The Victim Party need?

Tabi: You got me.

Colin: Like I said earlier, this is the cry of defeat. This was a band in crisis, with some members more in crisis than others. I suppose the answer is that what the Victim Party needed is what Bear and Chimp needed: to no longer be involved with one another.

That can be seen as depressing, or it can be seen as the first step toward healing. I prefer to think of it as the latter. Now that the chaos has run its course, and all the scars are healed, all the drugs are flushed and the bottles empty, this is when life starts all over again. New bands. New triumphs. New Failures.

Getting To Know The Victim Party *is available now on Ugly Pop: uglypop.bigcartel.com.*



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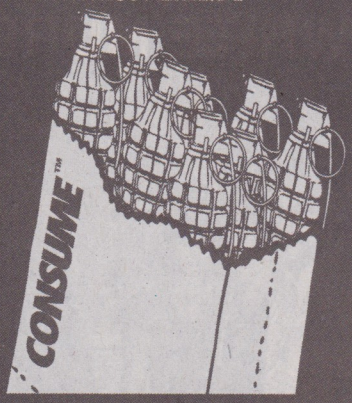

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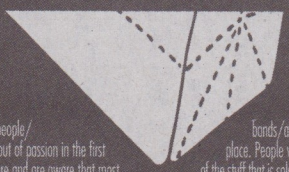

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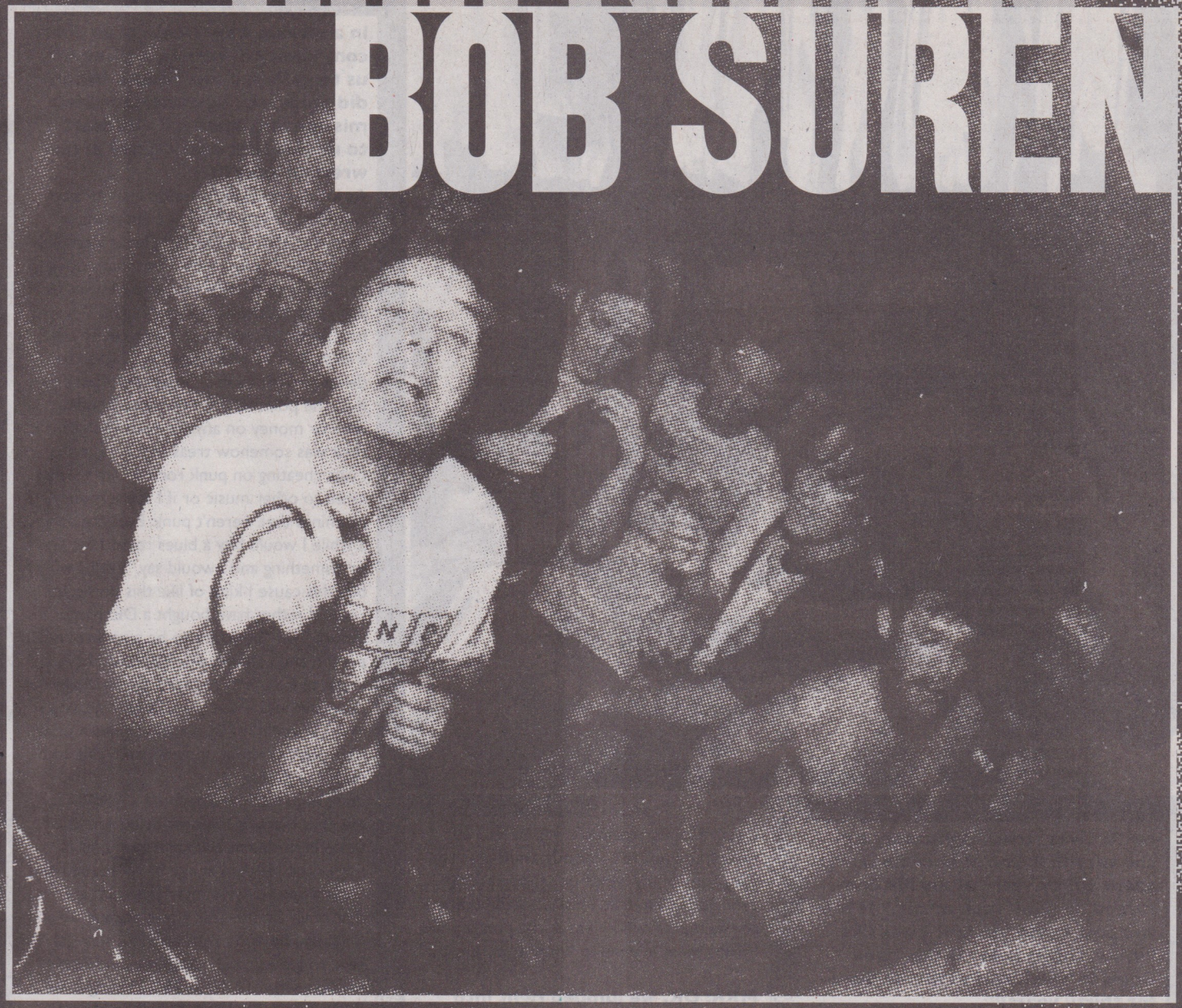
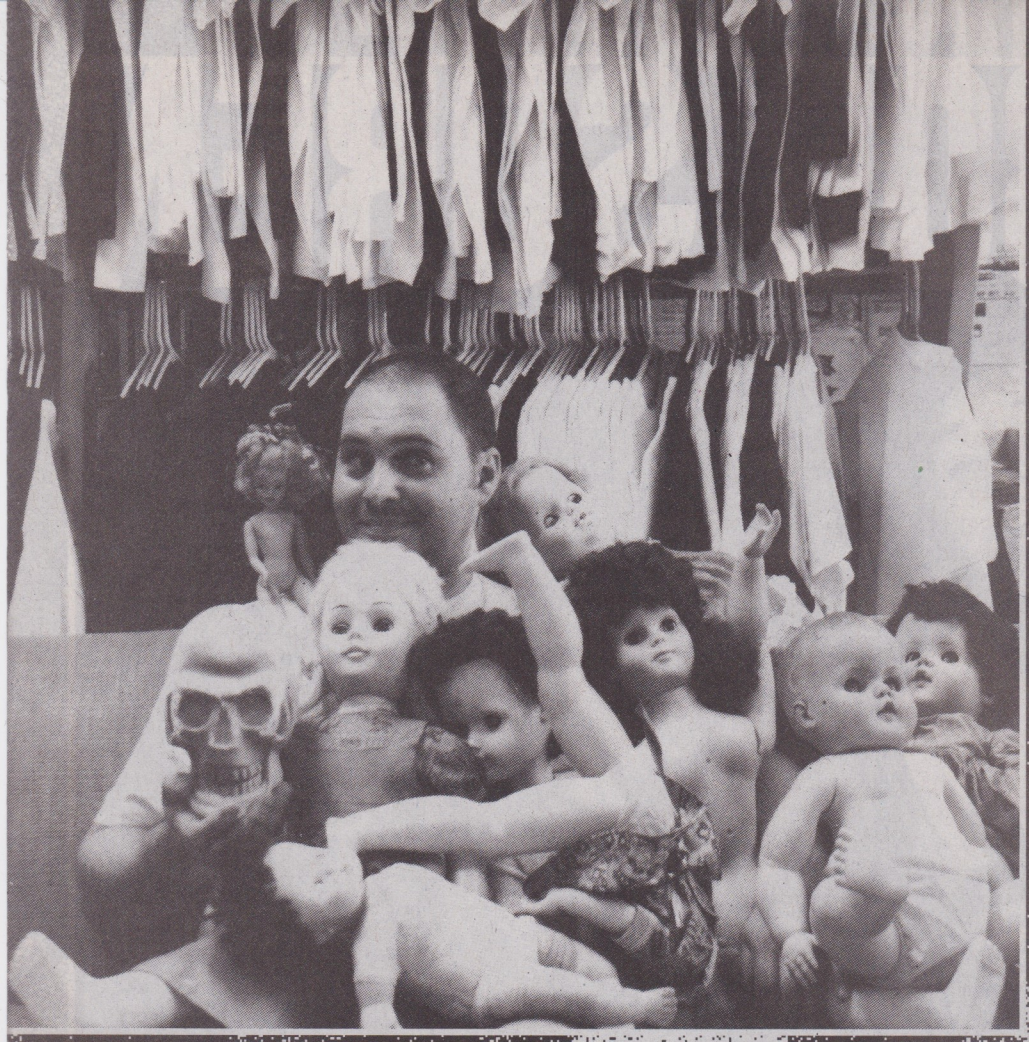


Bob Suren was a pillar of the DIY punk world in Florida during the '90s and the first decade of the 21st century. Through his mail order distro and record store (Sound Idea, which was also a concert venue), and his zine (Heavy Rotation), Bob facilitated the discovery of obscure bands and international punk rock. With his label (Burrito Records), Bob supported young bands and also ensured that classic Florida punk from the '80s remained in circulation. As the vocalist of bands like Failure Face and Murder-Suicide Pact, Bob vented outrage and frustration, often tinged with his weird humor. I've known Bob since 1993, and he lived a life that was the total embodiment of a fully committed punk-rock lifer. But suddenly a couple of years ago, in rather quick succession, his record store closed, his marriage ended, he sold his monumental record collection, he wrote a touching book (Crate Digger) about what he calls his bygone "obsession" with punk rock, and he left the country. Now he is back and living in Austin, TX. He does not regret turning away from his former life. I caught up with Bob recently so that he could tell me more about his life in and out of punk. An unabridged version of this conversation appears on the MRR website.

Interview and introduction by B. Rousse. Photos from Bob's own collection.



MRR: I was struck right away by the very first line of your book: "I spent thirty years of my life consumed by punk rock music." It is in the past tense. At first I was like, "Wow, this is over? Is this book Bob's farewell to this life he lived for thirty years?"

That was my intention when I was writing it and when I left the US on May 29, 2013. It was my intention to never come back and my intention to live as far outside of my past as possible. I didn't want to have any further involvement with punk rock. I thought not that I had done it all and seen it all, but that I wanted to try something new. I wanted to broaden my horizons. I wanted to be around different sorts of people and have different types of experiences. In a way I feel that my obsession with punk rock kind of led to my personal downfall. One of the people who looked at my book before it got published said, "This is the story of *Moby Dick* told with punk rock in the background."

MRR: Woah.

He said, "You are Captain Ahab, you ruined yourself," and I said, "Wow, I never thought of it that way, but yes, you are right." So when I left the USA on May 29, 2013 for Costa Rica my intention was to reinvent myself, and not tell anybody I met anything about any of my bands or selling records or anything like that. I just wanted people to like me for who I was in the present and I didn't want anyone to know about my past.

MRR: OK, we jumped right into the existential deep end. The most striking moment I found in the book was that moment you realized you needed such an existential reorganization; you had a divorce that forced a rearrangement of your priorities and your sense of what's important and significant in life. And that was the moment when you looked at your record collection not as a giant human puzzle whose pieces you were collecting and assembling—suddenly it became just a bunch of trivial objects, and so you went out with a sense of needing to reinvent yourself.

So I would disagree with the editor who compared you to Ahab, because Ahab never tried to reinvent himself. Also, one very un-Ahab-like thing that punk rock gave to you—and that you in turn fostered in a serious way—was a place for a community of rejects, a place for us to gather, a focal point. When did punk rock become your life's mission and when did you start to realize that mission had in fact wrecked your life?

As for the mission, I would say in my early twenties, shortly after I put out my first record in 1991. I thought, "This is incredibly important, this is a subculture that's doing and saying some vital things and I want to push this as far as I can." I thought, "This isn't entertainment, this is a cause. This is a lifestyle, it's a philosophy, and I need to devote myself to this." I devoted myself to it to the point where I thought spending time or money on anything outside of punk rock was somehow treasonous. I felt like I was cheating on punk rock if I let myself listen to other music or if I spent money on things that weren't punk. Every once in a while I would buy a blues record for $4 or something and I would say, "Well, I will buy this cause I kind of like this music, but I would rather have bought a Discharge record." It's important to be a well-rounded person and I am actually not sure I have it in me to be a well-rounded person. I am obsessive and when I like something, boy, I like it a whole lot. I have always had a hard time with moderation and I am trying to be better with that.

Punk rock really did become a mission for me, that went up exponentially in importance in my life in 2003 after a friend of mine died. He died at age of 38 in 2003 and I was a few years younger than him and that really hit me. This guy is dead at 38 and what had he done with his life? I thought, "I have to get as much shit done as possible because what if I die at 38?" I thought life could be over at any moment and I said, "I need to work harder, I need to put out more records, I need to write more songs, I need to put on more concerts, I need to write more articles, I need to collect more records, I need to be doing more to advance punk rock and, perhaps in some egotistical way, leave a mark." I think that's a dangerous thing. These days I don't tell people I like their bands because I don't want them to get big-headed. In the '90s people started telling me that they liked my music or they liked what I had written, that they admired my work and at some point that somehow tainted my focus.

MRR: A lot of the stories told in your book are stories you collected first personally by being in contact with a lot of the '80s Florida bands that no one would have heard of otherwise. But on the other hand this very fact about your book sort of conflicts with one of your stated

goals, which is that you have to leave that past behind.

I really wanted to leave the past behind when I wrote the final word of that book. Easter Sunday 2012 is the day I completed that book and that day I wrote like a demon. I wrote almost 8,000 words that day and I said, "It's done now." I put the period on that last sentence and said, "This is it, I am done with punk rock."

I really tried to walk away from the punk rock way of life, but it really is so much a part of me and even if I don't buy records anymore, even if I am not terribly interested in the bands on stage, even if I don't wear a GBH shirt with mustard stains on it anymore…You know, just the ideals of punk rock and the lifestyle, it's still a part of who I am.

MRR: What was it that originally made you move to Tampa and Brandon in the mid '90s?

I came to Brandon because at the time it had the best punk scene in the state of Florida. And I made some good friends in Brandon before I moved there. There is a story in the book about seeing the band Slap of Reality when I was in college and meeting the drummer, Rob Sexton, and how he became one of my best friends and a kind of mentor. I stayed in communication with Rob throughout college and when I got out of college he invited me to visit and it was a blast. I went and visited Rob every weekend just to have a social life and to be part of the Tampa/Brandon punk scene. Then we started playing music together and one day when we were driving back from band practice he said we should open a record store. I ended up doing that on my own. Rob wasn't able to make the commitment to running a record store [*Ed. note: He has one now in St. Petersburg, FL called Planet Retro*], but it was his idea. It was this guy I met at a show when I was in college who basically led me to rearrange my life. I ended up moving from basically a comfortable life on the east coast of Florida to the west coast of Florida to jump into a giant financial endeavor that I probably was not prepared for and that I made up as I went along. I thought it would just be a commercial venture—open this record store and be open eight hours a day and lock the door up at night and go home. But it became my life; it became more than a store; it became a family and mission to me.

MRR: You were already doing a mail order distro before that.

Sound Idea Distribution mail order started in 1993 and it blew up. It was so big I had records all over the house and the phone ringing in the middle of the night. Even with the physical store, the mail order ended up being a huger thing. The mail order was 75-80% of my income. The store only made money for a few years; most of the time it broke even or lost money, but the mail order was so healthy that it didn't matter. The mail order offset any of the store expense. The store was a huge overhead every month. I did it for so many years because it became a clubhouse for punks. It was my home away from home and it was where I assembled a new family basically.

MRR: What were some of the bands in the '90s that attracted you to Florida?

From a very young age I recognized the value of bands like Hated Youth and Roach Motel and Rat Cafeteria and Morbid Opera and I thought, "Somebody needs to remember this" and I did my best even in the early '90s writing articles. I wrote a three-part article in the early '90s for MRR *Scum Pit* and, man, I was getting letters and questions about that fifteen to twenty years later. I just thought, "No one else is doing this and it needs to be done and if I don't do it nobody is going to do it." When I would go to Tampa in the early '90s, it was mostly centered around this record store called Blue Chair that was in Ybor City that was run by Edwin who was in the band Awake and later the End of the Century Party. Edwin had this epicenter of punk at his record store in Tampa and all these people who hung out at his store. It was a very funny, nerdy, dorky scene and it wasn't snotty; it was inclusive. If you were a new person you were welcomed into the scene and I thought, "These bands kick ass and these people kick ass and this is where I want to be." Almost as soon as I got there it started petering out.

MRR: Blue Chair closed in 1996, I think.

Well, I came there (Tampa/Brandon) in probably the infancy of your generation and I thought, "These guys have all the energy and attitude and they are fun." And I remember there was the one show at Blue Chair where everybody wore a Michael Gross mask. And I remember there was another show at Blue Chair where Rob Sexton said, "Hey, we are not going to perform another song until you guys form a skanking conga line." And you all skanked down the sidewalk and made three circles around the hot dog vendor and skanked back in. There was a 75 person skanking conga line going down 7th Ave in Ybor City that made three circles around the hot dog cart and came back in and I thought, "This is the scene I want to be a part of, the skanking conga line scene." And two-three years later that scene was dead, but that is the way it is. When I was running Sound Idea I saw it too. Sound Idea was open for about fourteen years, I did shows on a regular basis for about ten and I would notice that after two years it would be a bunch of different faces. But there were a couple of people who were there for the long haul and those people noticed it too. Some of those were my employees and probably the most important was this band the Reckless Deerhunters who never got any recognition. They made a CD, if you can find it, find *The Reckless Deerhunter* CD. You can also hear them on the *Frank Forever* compilation album. The Reckless Deerhunters were older guys, a few years older than me, and they played show after show after show. They are great musicians, they are great people, very talented and very funny and they just wanted to be part of something. They saw the value of what I was doing there and played for every generation of kids in the Brandon punk scene. They played shows at Sound Idea from 1998 to 2008. They played for ten years and probably played more times at Sound Idea than any other band and they got to see the changing of the guard every couple of years. Every couple of years some new kids would come in and go, "This is the best band in the world." On their home turf at Sound Idea, the Reckless Deerhunters were the best band in the world.

MRR: Let's talk about the '90s for a little bit. I remember a show: Failure Face, Unwound and Pohgoh at the Blue Chair. It seems like you might never see a lineup like that now at a show.

The '90s were so fragmented. The '80s were so...the first half of the '80s was so regimented. Punk rock was so narrowly defined in the early '80s. There was a definite hardcore sound, a definite hardcore rule book around '86, which is when a lot of people point to this crossroad. In 1986 the best punk rock bands either broke up or they went speed metal or they went wimpy. Like 1986: the Dead Kennedys and Black Flag broke up; DRI and Corrosion of Conformity and Agnostic Front went speed metal; 7 Seconds and Dag Nasty just decided to fucking

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CASH IS BEST, BUT TRY TO HIDE IT. MONEY ORDERS ARE GOOD, TOO. CHECKS ARE A LAST RESORT. WE HAVE TO WAIT FOR THEM TO CLEAR AND THAT TAKES A WHILE. BECAUSE OF CERTAIN ASSHOLES, WE HAVE A NEW POLICY: YOU BOUNCE A CHECK, WE BREAK YOUR NECK!

suck. Even though I wasn't into speed metal or the new 7 Seconds or Dag Nasty stuff, when this happened it created a precedent and it allowed other styles to branch out and flourish. And even though I am not the biggest fan of Unwound, even though I am not the biggest fan of Braid or anything like that, none of that stuff would have happened if it weren't for the 1986 crossroad. A lot of people say 1986 was the death of punk rock or the death of hardcore, but I would prefer to think of it as a huge branching off, and around 1986 all these different subgenres started. That is when grindcore started taking off and around 1986 is when the speed metal crossover thing took off and in 1986 is when a lot of these more melodic more introspective type bands started happening. I think that led to the '90s and a lot of people think the '90s was a lot of shitty music. It was a very diverse period for punk rock and depending on where your tastes lean it was either really shitty or really exciting. I can find a ton of value in a lot of the '90s punk. There were these really hard aggressive, political bands like Dropdead and Crossed Out and Man is the Bastard who were doing something brilliant. Then there were these melodic bands like Screeching Weasel, whose first several albums were fantastic. It was all part of the same thing. It was all underneath the punk umbrella, but just different flavors. I don't think the '90s suck. A lot of people romanticize the '80s and say the '90s sucked, but the '90s had a whole lot of value. One thing that was really great about the '90s is zines really exploded. More people had access to computers, more people started making zines and even though a lot of those zines only lasted an issue or two it was giving people the chance to express themselves. If you could not play an instrument or you lived in a small town without any punks you could always make a zine.

I think Florida had some of the best zines in the '90s. I liked *Scam*, that was Iggy and Chuck from the band Chicken Head, I thought that was the best Florida zine. I think I had all the issues of *Scam*. There is one called *Lizard's Eyelid* that I liked a lot. There was…

MRR: You have to mention your own zine.

I had my own zine called *Heavy Rotation* [which] I think I started in '93-'95. I think I did eight issues. There was Adel from Timescape Zero who did a really thought-provoking zine called *Feast of Fear of Famine*.

MRR: *No Idea*.

A lot of people don't know that *No Idea*, the very popular, prolific record label, started out as a super duper high quality zine. *No Idea* was a really impressive zine. When I got a copy of *No Idea* in the mail the production values were so over the top that I could not believe it was a DIY venture, but it was. It was a guy who threw his entire self into putting out the best zine that he could. I really have a ton of respect for what he was doing with that zine.

MRR: Tell me a little more about some of the bands that started at Sound Idea and that played there, that continued after that and that are still a reflection and a manifestation of what you started.

Most of the bands that played at Sound Idea played nowhere else but Sound Idea. A lot of them were just high school kids playing in their first bands and I am glad I was able to give them their first chance to play in front of people. A lot of kids came up to me over the years and said, "If I start a band can I play here?" The answer was always "Yes" and that got a lot of people interested in music and I am glad I was able to put some people on that path. But as far as bands that started out at Sound Idea and that have gone on…I would say the biggest one is Merchandise. Merchandise played their first show at Sound Idea and I don't even remember it. [That was] towards the end, the last couple of years at Sound Idea were 2006-2008 and some of those people have been the most prolific. Like those guys from Divisions, they did Divisions and Cult Ritual and Merchandise. Holy Mountain played a lot of shows at Sound Idea. Those bands came out of the Sound Idea scene. I wouldn't say Holy Mountain was a Sound Idea band per se because they played everywhere, but they played Sound Idea a number of times. Cult Ritual met each other hanging out at Sound Idea. They were all in different bands, they were all teenagers and that is where they knew each other from. I played drums in a band called Jon Madden and the Electric Condoms that I am very proud of. You can find our demo on YouTube; I thought we had great songs,

but we never made a record. There were just a bunch of these goofy one-off bands at Sound Idea. Like every month there was a new band and a lot of them were fucking terrible, but people were taking a shot and that is the really important thing that punk rock lets you take a shot.

MRR: You felt this calling to archive and historicize. Your book shows that it wasn't just an obsession, it was also a collection of stories you felt called to share.
At some point I realized that the records were more than just records: they were little pieces of the past and they needed to be preserved in plastic bags in good condition so that they would last forever and ever. I thought that at some point someone would want to know about this stuff. I think I was listening to the Negative Trend record one day and as I listened to it many, many times—because it's one of my favorite records of all time—I happened to be listening to it and looking at the liner notes or the insert for the millionth time and I noticed the day I was listening to it was five or six years after the very day it was recorded and I thought, "Wow, that's an interesting coincidence. This is like a little piece of history and maybe I should save as many of these things as possible."
And so I started saving flyers and stickers and set lists and posters and zines and video tapes. I thought, "This means something, this isn't just a bunch of noise; this is a vibrant, very interesting subculture and somebody should be doing this" and it probably didn't occur to me that there were thousands and thousands of people across the world doing exactly the same thing and some of them doing a much better job. When I visited San Francisco for the first time in 1997 I went to *MRR* and saw the enormous *MRR* record collection and I said, "I am glad this exists, this is the Library of Congress of punk rock." And I said, "This is what I have been trying to do but *MRR* is about 50 light years ahead of me," but still I wanted to collect every punk rock record that I didn't have. At some point I did want to have every punk rock record in the world. I thought, "You know what? Every punk record is important; I need to save every one." And then I did start saving every one.

MRR: I know the internet probably impacted you in a lot of ways, especially as someone who was running a record store and record label and so on. You were a participant in a punk scene who grew up in it way before the internet, and who saw it coming, who saw the internet arise and witnessed how it profoundly changed music. How you think the internet changed punk rock?
It really, really fucked up record sales. It's part of the reason I am not in business anymore. I remember one of my former customers was in my record store and he hadn't bought a record from me in ages and ages and he was looking though CDs and said, "I haven't bought a record in years, I just download everything" and I said, "I know motherfucker, that doesn't help me." But I think the cool thing about the internet is that there isn't rare music anymore.
A couple of weeks ago I was telling Jack Control the story of this young kid who would come into my record store. He was like fourteen years old and he came into the store for the first time with his dad because he didn't even drive and he said, "Excuse me, do you have any Dead Kennedys records?" and I gave him a DK record. A month later he came in and asked if I had anything by Sötlimpa and I said, "Like the old Swedish thrash band from the early '80s?" He said, "Yeah, do you have anything by them?" and I said, "No, I don't think there is anything out there by Sötlimpa. How the fuck have you ever heard of Sötlimpa?" and he said, "Oh, the internet." And then he said, "Do you have that Absurd record?" and I was like, "Absurd, the really rare Swedish hardcore record from 1983 and only 300 were made, Bullshit Records I think?" And he said, "Yeah, do you have that?" and I was like, "No, I don't have that record." And he said, "Do you wanna hear it?" and I said, "Do you have that record?" and he said, "I have a digital copy. Do you wanna hear it?" and I said, "Yes, I do." So this kid who was into punk rock for a month gave me a copy of the Absurd record which I had never heard and I think that's really cool that there is no more rare music. Music shouldn't be rare, it shouldn't be elitist. I don't like this country club bullshit, "If you weren't there, you don't get to hear it." I think everybody should get to hear it.

MRR: Do you think that the digitization of music also made it easier for you to cut the cord, so to speak, on your record collection? You spent literally decades building it up and seemingly in an instant you decided it's worthless, or at least existentially worthless. It's got a price value, but the things themselves just didn't fucking matter to you anymore.
It took thirty years to collect and like one horrible day to realize that it was just a bunch of stuff to me at that point, and then it took me half a year to sell my record collection. I no longer feel the need to be the archivist. There are people doing it just as well or better and I have everything I will want to hear on my iPod and if anything is missing it's out there on the internet somewhere. Honestly I have not listened to that much punk rock these days. Every once in a while I will feel like listening to something and I will put it on but it's kind of like if you got out of a drug addiction you don't necessarily want to be hanging out at a drug party any more. Every once in a while I will put on Black Flag and I will listen to four or five songs and then I go, "OK, that's enough" and I will take it off and I will put on something else. I will put on Thin Lizzy or I will put on Miles Davis or I will put on Sun Ra. I deprived myself of a lot of music for a lot of years because I thought it was in some way treasonous to listen to anything but punk rock.

MRR: Maybe I can recommend some German minimal techno to you.
Sure. I have never heard it. This part of my life is about checking out new stuff and saying yes to things.

MRR: Some of the most inspiring parts of your book are when you had MDC play at the store in 2003 and you were sitting on the PA speaker watching and you had this profound sense of everything being good, everything is as it should be. That your path had led you up to this point where you could make this possible, to sit down and look at this happen and look at everybody freaking out and MDC was playing in the back of your record store in Brandon, Florida, it was this profound moment of fulfillment in your life.
Then another store recollection—you were playing in a band and you ended up on bass even though you wanted to play drums, but the other guy was a better drummer and you were 36, the drummer was 30 and the other two people in the band were a high school couple. You were like, "Here I am, a 36-year-old guy who just started a band with someone who is in his thirties and two people who are in high school who are a couple but who are about to break up." Reading this I thought, "Wow, this is beautiful, this is a story of someone on a life adventure." There you were, 36 playing with a 30-year-old and two people who were in high school and you said, "Fuck it, let's make up something new." When I read that I thought that is amazing, this ability to be totally immersed in the tradition of punk

Interview by Chris Bland.

BOB SUREN:

"Buy some records or I'll waste this filthy hippie."

ME AND BOB YUCKING IT UP. YES THE GUN IS LOADED. THERE IS TRUST THERE.

Recently I flew to Brandon, Florida, to play a show at the Burrito Records festival, so I figured that this would be the perfect opportunity to interview Bob Suren, the man responsible for Burrito Records and Sound Idea Distribution. I caught up with him as he was preparing his store to be invaded by people there to see classic bands like Roach Motel, Failure Face, and Scrotum Grinder.

and to pass it on to the next generations. You passed it on to several generations. Punk generations are shorter, I don't know how long a punk generation is, maybe...
Maybe three years.

MRR: Yeah. So, let me push you in this existentialist trip a little bit deeper. There was this contradiction in your life, and part of it was the commitment to punk rock, which looks in certain parts of the book to be totally fulfilling and meaningfully carrying on a tradition and passing it down and watching something beautiful happen before your very eyes and participating in it. And at the same time you had a total commitment to your relationship to and love for your wife. But then these two things started slowly to pull in different directions and so there is a kind of contradiction in your identity in that sense, two fundamental commitments that demanded two very different involvements from you. It's something that kept occurring to me as I was reading your book. That your relationship seems to have been broken by or somehow compromised by your immersion in and continuation of the tradition of punk. You can't tell the story in your book and you can't tell the whole story here, but it sounds as though your relationship was compromised because of your split commitments. On the one hand you were devoted to punk and all that involved, and on the other hand you had more time at home because the record store eventually collapsed, and your wife was there and yet you weren't spending that much time with her because you were so immersed in your new podcast [Punk Rock Record Party], etc. You were already pulled in different directions before, but after the record store closed and you were at home more, at a certain point it looked to your wife that you had chosen the other commitment, the commitment to punk and music, over her.

Yes. I never found the right balance, but I think I could have maybe done the two things. I think I could have had the two sides to the coin, but I kept pushing and pushing and pushing and I made it lopsided. She understood that I was fully into this lifestyle when she met me and I assumed she was cool with it. As the years went on it became more and more important to me and there were times I would say, "Sorry hunny, I have to go to Miami this weekend" or whatever, and she understood it was part of my mission and my passion, part of why I was put on this earth. So it seemed cool and she signed off on me every time I said, "I've got to do this, I've got to do that." When my friend Frank died in 2003 at 38 I thought, "Life is too short." I was getting into bed with my wife and I got a call from Frank's friend Scott, who was the drummer in his band. Scott says, "I am at the hospital with Frank now, they are pulling the plug in the morning. If you want to come see him, this is your last chance to see him alive."

MRR: Damn.

It was about 10:15 at night and I said, "I have to go say goodbye to my friend" and I put on my clothing and I went to the hospital and I said goodbye to Frank. And when I spun around on my heel to leave his room I knew it was the last time I would see him. When I got back home, when I got back into bed with my wife I was crying and I

said, "Will you help me have as much fun as possible? You know, because we don't know when it's going to be over." She said, "Yes." And I said, "I want to do everything I can because I don't know when it's going to be over." And she said, "Yes, I will do that all with you." But then she didn't…I would keep coming up with these things to do, most of it was music related, which wasn't much interest to her. And I would say, "Would you want to go to whatever and go see 7 Seconds tonight?" And sometimes she would say "yes" and sometimes she would say "no." And when she said "yes" she would go with me and she wouldn't be that interested in it, and when she said "no" I ended up going on my own.

She started saying "no" more often and I started making punk a bigger part of my life than her. Maybe at one time I did have the right balance, but I lost the right balance. At one time it was probably 95% punk and 5% wife. It's fucked up, you don't do that when you have a wife, when you are in a committed relationship. Then you make that person the most important thing in your world, and the other things, even though you love them and you were into them, those things are what you need to scale back on a little bit. But I didn't see that. I figured, "She accepts me, she knows this is what I am into, she knows this is important to me, and she is always going to put up with it." Then one day she didn't want to put up with it anymore. It's not as much that punk ruined my life, it's just that this obsession ruined my life. I could have been obsessed with soccer or I could have been obsessed with Beanie Babies. I could have been obsessed with water skiing or something, but that fact is that I have this all-or-nothing personality. If you've ever seen me play music or ever seen me do anything, I give it all I can and when I am giving it all I can there is nothing left for anything else.

MRR: How old are you now?

I will be 46 pretty soon and I guess I will be an adult at 46. It happens a lot earlier for some people but basically I have to realize I have been living like a teenager my entire life and I am 46 and I am still living like a teenager and in some ways that's cool and in some ways it is not. The huge penalty is that I am not with my favorite person in the world anymore because I decided to be like a teenager.

MRR: Yeah, OK, that's a penalty, but the other side, there are these moments of complete punk rock joy and fulfillment that you described in your book. Perhaps this is just part of the fragile and uncertain adventure of human life. In short, I am fighting against your interpretation of your life. I see that there is a breakdown that happened. I am pressing you about the interpretation you give of your past, about the joy and punk traditions that it created. I don't agree that it was some kind of waste when compared to the conventional relationship.

I don't think that my life in punk rock was a waste. I think I got to achieve a lot of really important things and I got to pass down a lot to a lot of younger people who are going to keep it going, but it came at an incredible price to me. And sometimes I wish that I had done less with my life in punk and more as a husband. I am very proud of all that I accomplished in punk rock and, boy, am I paying for it. I am basically at peace with that now as much as I can be and I am sure it will get better every year. You know all those Saturday nights I put on concerts at the store, all those nights we stayed up folding shirts until three in the morning, all those band practices, and all those tours and all those trips out of town for $50? That is all awesome stuff, I am proud of that. I like every record I have ever played on. I stand by my body of work. It is just that the people who have consumed my body of work, who have bought my records and read the articles I have written, and the people who are going to read this book, they can't comprehend what it has cost me.

MRR: What's your advice for the record collectors out there?

Tesco Vee said it best in maybe issue #9 of *MRR* a very long time ago. He wrote this wonderful piece, and they should reprint it, on how to enjoy record collecting and how to not drive yourself crazy. You should collect things that make you happy and not to get too hung up on things that will just drive you up the wall, just collect for the joy of the music and who gives a shit if it's first pressing and if it's the rare vinyl color. The music is important, the object is not important, which is why I am fine with having digital copies of all my music and I really don't care if I ever hold another copy of the Eat's *Communist Radio* in my hands ever again.

MRR: Do you have any advice for people who are trying to balance a relationship with punk rock and with romantic love?

I would say that the romantic love is far more important. I would say that you should not lose sight of the person you are in love with because that is incredibly rare and punk rock is incredibly common and punk rock is wonderful but it is everywhere and it is all over the place and the person you are in love with is the only one in the world so try really hard to keep that person.

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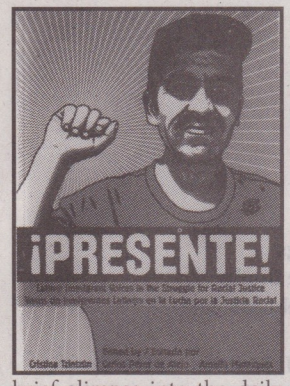

¡Presente!
Latin@ Immigrant Voices in the Struggle for Racial Justice / Voces de Inmigrantes Latin@s en la Lucha por la Justicia Racial
Edited by/Editado por:
Cristina Tzintzún, Carlos Pérez de Alejo, Arnulfo Manriquez
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I thoroughly enjoyed this book. The essays speak to the heart and gave me a brief glimpse into the daily life and struggle of the Mexican-American immigrant. Several important bills and policies from around the United States were explained, and the contributors shared the real life implications of the implemented laws. I am awe-inspired by the strength and bravery of the Latin@s who share their experiences in this collection. I can only speak to my experience, and as someone who considers themselves to be an ally in the struggle of immigrants in the US I cannot recommend this book enough. It really illuminated just how naïve I am about the conditions that led to mass migration to the US, problems that migrants deal with on a daily basis and the extent of the system of institutionalized racism and xenophobia that abounds in our country today.

¡Presente! is broken up into three sections. The first, "Our Problems," has some great history surrounding the conditions that led to many people uprooting themselves from their families and histories in Mexico and emigrating to the US. The effects of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on the typical rural Mexican family were particularly interesting to learn about. Families like that of contributing author María Duque were forced to move away from their familiar, agrarian-based communities to bustling cities, and finally to the US to cope with the changes that NAFTA wrought. Post-NAFTA, families were no longer able to provide for themselves by growing and harvesting from the earth, though they were told that NAFTA would provide a new market for people to sell their goods. In reality NAFTA decimated the livelihood of the typical Mexican farmer. People couldn't hope to compete with the finely-tuned industrial agriculture giants of the United States. In the words of Duque, "The only ones that benefit from free trade agreements are the rich."

A common theme that I read in the book and have heard echoed from friends and coworkers who've migrated to the US is that they never wanted to come here. This seems like an intuitive thought, the idea that most people would prefer to live out their lives in the land of their youths, places that are familiar and full of customs and attitudes that are personal and significant. NAFTA and the actions of President Salinas de Gortari decimated the Mexican economy and without work, without hope, millions of people had no choice but to pursue a new and unfamiliar life in the US.

Section two, "Our Solutions", offers some great explanations of the effects of bills like the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act. More commonly known as SB1070, the bill (now law) led to legal harassment and detention of Arizonans suspected of being undocumented. The organizational efforts of whites, Latin@s and African Americans didn't stop the bill from becoming a law, but did start to create an environment of collaboration and community in the neighborhoods that were being persecuted by this abhorrent legislation. Two prominent organizers who helped found the organization Tierra Y Libertad share their experiences in attempting to organize people, not only into fighting a system of racism and bigotry, but promoting healthy lives for themselves and members of their communities.

Something that I really benefited from in this section of the book was an effort to address the efforts of white allies wanting to define an appropriate role in the movement. The effects of my white privilege pervade every arena of my life, but feeling guilty for my inherent opportunities won't do anything to lessen the discrimination against immigrants and, likewise, doesn't do anything to promote the struggle of undocumented peoples in our country. I can't exist outside of my privilege, but I can't let that divide me from trying to promote the freedom of the oppressed—to do so would be counterproductive and wasteful. In the words of Rosalba Romero, a founding member of Tierra Y Libertad, "We need to see what we have in common and, based on that, organize together."

This section contains so many amazing examples of the power of social movements and the dedication and spirit of migrants working to empower themselves and their communities. There is the story of Fuerza Unida, an organization created after the closure of a Levi's factory in Texas, the creation and maintenance of which has helped seamstresses work with dignity and fair compensation for over twenty years. The section concludes with the powerful essay of Pamela Reséndiz, an activist pursuing the signing into law of the Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act. Reséndiz shares her story of leaving Mexico as a child and growing up in the US, acutely aware of her difference from the rest of her peers. She kept her undocumented status a secret for most of her life, until being illegally arrested and (legally) detained during a rally in Austin, Texas. After being detained she "came out" as undocumented, a cathartic and galvanizing action. DREAMers work tirelessly to promote the safety and inclusion of migrant youth, from social networking to hunger strikes. The passion and courage of people like Pamela Reséndiz is both humbling and ineffably inspirational.

The third and final section of this book, entitled "The Future Struggle," paints a portrait of the continuing struggle into the twenty-first century. Lucas Benítez of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) imparts his experience as a migrant agricultural worker and the struggles of securing basic worker's rights without the ability to unionize under the protection of the law. The CIW, using a combination of consciousness and commitment to effect change, worked to force Taco Bell and Yum! Brands to pay slightly more (a penny per pound) for tomatoes grown in Florida, ensuring that workers were paid a fair wage. Through the use of boycotts, educating consumers, and the solidarity efforts of students and religious assemblies, the CIW was able to sit down with Taco Bell and work out a deal that secured them a fair wage increase and ensured the basic safety of workers (rights that aren't guaranteed by law). The CIW now has agreements with several fast food companies and the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange and is still working towards ensuring that 100% of consumers are receiving tomatoes that were grown fairly and without the exploitation of migrant agricultural workers.

I could really go on and on about this collection of essays. There are so many more facets and accounts than what I went into brief detail about and the entirety of this book is just a small glimpse into what has been done and will be done to promote the struggle for racial justice in the United States. This book is a must read and I already have a chain of people in line to borrow this book, both allies to the cause and undocumented friends who were shocked and overjoyed to see that plights like their own are being written down and shared.

—Courtney Vigil

Stolen Sharpie Revolution
Alex Wrekk
$10 US, $15 world • 152 pgs
stolensharpierevolution.org

One thing it took me too long to truly learn is something that seems so simple and obvious: anyone can start a punk band at any time. Coming up in punk through hardcore as a teen girl, I rarely saw people like me playing in the bands I watched, and never felt supported or encouraged to do so without judgment. It always seemed like my teen boy buds were able to automatically assume, in an effortlessly confident way, that they could make music if they felt like it, and that people would give a shit no matter how great or terrible it was. And why wouldn't they think that, after attending shows week in and week out that often had six bands playing without a single female musician to speak of? We were on the sidelines, taking photos and internalizing the misogyny that surrounded us both in the pit and coming from the stage, constantly having to prove ourselves to keep being welcomed. "You're not like other girls; you *get it*, you're cool," we were told, and we fought for those scraps of approval in petty, girl-hate-ridden social circles. As the years went by, our male friends' bands got better through practice and experience, and we got even more discouraged from playing music while comparing ourselves to them. Forget it, I can't start now, we said. I'll be terrible, and everyone else is so good already; they've already said everything that needs to be said. Haven't they?

This updated edition of *Stolen Sharpie Revolution* is, as always, a good reminder to those of us whose voices are heard less often in punk communities that yes, there is indeed a whole lot more to say, that we can start doing it anytime (even as old farts, like me at the ripe old age of twenty-three in my first real band back in early '09!), and that we have a few options to make it happen, including making a zine! As with punk in theory, there is no entry barrier to creating zines other than not knowing how to do it, since it is so cheap and easy to do. This inherent level of accessibility is one of the crucial tenets of the zine format as well as a huge boon to its community. With *Stolen Sharpie Revolution*, Alex Wrekk eliminates whatever barriers are left for those of us who feel that endless drive, that frustration and need to be visible and to be heard, by providing the necessary building blocks for beginners to learn all about zines and how to make and distribute them. It is a great handbook for everyone from people who have no idea what a zine is or can be to the most seasoned, gnarled old veteran of the zine community. Detailed how-tos for everything from thinking up writing topics, to zine construction and layouts, to getting the word out and participating in community events, make this book a must-have for all.

I've bought for myself (and later given away) older versions of this book several times because of how helpful it is as a resource. Its cut-and-paste layout and accessible, open, and friendly voice are a welcome change from other resources that attempt to analyze the community they are a part of, which often take on a stuffy, academic, or irrelevant tone. At times it evokes Lynda Barry in that it uplifts and encourages you to try to create, no matter how bad you think it is in the process. Even as someone who has been making zines consistently for seven years (and extremely inconsistently before then) and organized many zine fests, I was pleasantly surprised to find that this book also raises more advanced questions that are often debated without hard resolution in the zine community at large, such as the impact of the Internet on zines and the role of zine libraries. Worth picking up for everyone who writes, makes record inserts, draws comics, or just photocopies their ass on the work copier when no one's looking. (And especially worth picking up for those of you who aren't given as much space, or heard as loudly/as often in our punk communities. Send me your new zine after you read this and make one, please!)

—Jen Twigg

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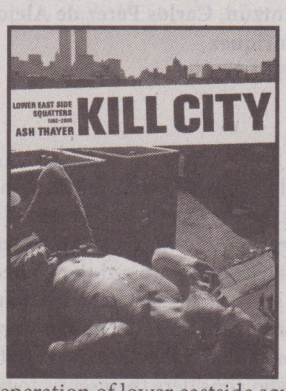


Kill City
Ash Thayer
$50 • 176 pgs
Powerhouse Books
powerhousebooks.com

Disclosure: This review will be biased.

If there's one group of people I have a soft spot for, it's squatters. I moved to New York in the fall of 2001, six years after Sid, the protagonist in *Sunshine Crust* does, which puts her character solidly in the generation of lower eastside squatters who were my newfound idols.

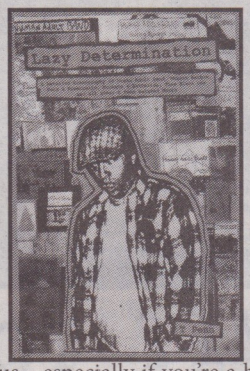
Sid is a strong young woman who opts to skip college, get a tattoo, and become a squatter in NYC. I'm not sure how she knew about squatters as a high school student in Connecticut (speaking as someone who was a high school student in Connecticut) but anyway, Sid shows up in NYC ready to squat with the best of them, and then has to come to terms with the politics of that world. When no rooms open up in any of the established LES buildings, she and some dickish punk guy decide to go across the bridge to check out Williamsburg. This might seem funny to you, but actually back in the '90s, Williamsburg was basically New Jersey as far as Manhattanites were concerned: it was kinda gross, kinda empty, and *definitely* not a cool place to live or admit you were from.

Throughout the book Sid seeks to prove she isn't "girly" (Which honestly is her most annoying trait, stop trying to prove yourself to a bunch of strangers! You're already kicking ass starting a squat! Who cares if you cry sometimes?!). Anyway, Sid has a complex about being tough and the book is definitely from her teenage point of view so sometimes reading it got a little annoying—like reading one of those "we ate from the dumpster and lived like gods" perzines that were so popular around then—but I appreciated it in a blast from the past sort of way.

If you know anything about New York punk culture you know at least a little about the squats in the book. Sid works at ABC No Rio, and sometimes sleeps on their roof during the summer (hands up if you remember the squatter camp up there!), she goes to C Squat, has friends at Serenity; it's a big old LES squatters party in this book and reading the veiled allusions to other squats and people and trying to figure out who that could possibly be was the most fun part of reading it.

Viewed either as a companion volume or as a standalone photography book (depending on your level of obsession with squatters I guess) Ash Thayer's *Kill City* is full of amazing pictures of life in NYC in the '90s. Punks hanging out playing foursquare, a bunch of badass women with sledgehammers creating a window in a brick wall, the filthy young people posing against the inside walls of decaying buildings or opening up a fire hydrant for water—all of the photos Thayer took as an art student/squatter are beautiful and real. You should at least check out her website for a look at some of the pictures in this book.

—Thera Webb



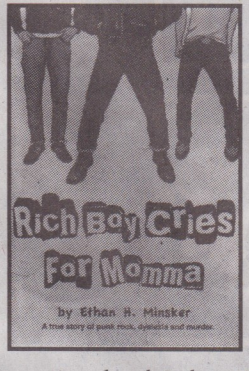
Lazy Determination: A Detailed Discography of Human Adult Band, Mohawk Barbie, Pots & Powercells, Buckets & Batteries, Thee Black One and All Other T Penn Related Music.
T Penn
$10 • 145 pgs
Dynatox Ministries
dynatoxministries.com

I'm one of those people who believe that it's important that we, as punks, document our history because no one else is going to do it for us…especially if you're a band or individual who exists on the fringes of punk, noise or outsider sounds. I understand that feeling of only putting out ten copies of your demo and still having issues getting rid of all of them. I fully understand the compulsion to document this, even though you may sometimes feel like absolutely no one is paying attention.

This is where T Penn comes in. I may be making a lot of assumptions because I don't know T Penn personally and most of these musical projects are unknown to me, but I'm guessing that you have to be fairly obsessive to publish a book about your personal discography. It starts in the mid '90s, detailing his own grunge / punk bands and continues up to present day avant-garde releases on his New Jersey noise label DIHD. Weird demo tape from 1994 that was released in an edition of 0? DVD-R full of cut-up footage of walking around New Brunswick set to a drone soundtrack? Tons of self-released, hand painted noise tapes? It's all here. There's really nothing misleading in the title of this book. It plainly says "detailed discography," but I was really expecting more history and more back stories about how different releases came into being. With a few exceptions, Penn sticks to just telling you the facts of each release in a clipped, conversational style, as if you were just sitting around having coffee with him as he flips through each release. Essentially, it is an analog version of Discogs.com. There's hardly any narrative to speak of and most of the sentences contained within are fragments. He also claims, "This release is in the top five of all of my output" at least seven or eight times. The effects of all of this can be simultaneously informative and maddening.

Like I said, T Penn never claimed that this book is more than a mere discography, so I'm approaching it with expectations that have been largely fabricated in my own head. As a discography of his musical works over the years, it is both functional and informative, including photos of almost every release, the musicians featured and the track listing. If you're in search of a deeper history or a compelling narrative, this is not the place to look.

—Greg Harvester



Rich Boy Cries for Momma
Ethan Minsker
$9.99 • 342 pages
Minsker & Lee Productions, LLC
ethanminsker.com

Seems that guys who have grown up around the same time and possibly the same place as the setting for this book would enjoy descriptions of the 9:30 Club or Dupont Circle, Adams Morgan and Smash Records. There is nostalgia throughout the tone of this story, tinged with indignation about being an outsider. On one hand, it's a coming of age story, with a blurry backdrop of punk scene factions in DC in the '80s, but on the other, it's one man's revised personal history of how he was discriminated against for being dyslexic, and had he not been, he would have assumed his role in the upper middle class naturally instead of drifting into the underground amongst the misfits and criminals. He resents his disability, and blames it for pushing him outside society, unlike a lot of punk tales that revel in the special subculture. He paints with broad strokes the divisions between skinheads, jocks, addicts, punks, and rich kids. There are a few depictions of bands of the time, occasionally mentioned as playing though he rarely describes the shows since going to them is just another excuse to be drinking with the "outsiders". You would think from his story that being punk is entirely about fashion and getting fucked up. He gets into fights, feels awkward around girls, drinks beer, and hangs around with his friends. On repeat.

The cover boasts of a "true story of punk rock, dyslexia and murder" which implies a murder mystery, possibly about punks, maybe spelled poorly. What you do get is a tale of a kid growing up at odds with his surroundings, in play-by-play, dreary detail. There is in fact a murder, but it doesn't amount to very much other than a turning point in the story where our protagonist seems jarred out of his reverie, and realizes life is short and he should make something of it. He decides to go to school (after all) once his friend is killed and he doesn't see meaning in his relationships anymore. Oddly, the character who dies is not always depicted as a loyal friend, or someone that Ethan doesn't get jealous of and fight with. But he does stick around for a considerable portion of his adolescence and cusp of adulthood before he dies. The meaning here is eked out with a very fine-toothed comb on my part, as I could barely keep the pages turning.

Every piece of the story is another night of getting drunk, or thinking about a girl he wants to get with, or people he either has to avoid or hang out with. It gets very tiring. Maybe a memoir isn't required to have a plot, but tell a person's story. You've got that here.

Something I found troubling throughout this novel, is the reoccurring need for the narrator to point out when someone is Black when otherwise race isn't mentioned. Usually Blackness is used as a description for somebody to watch out for, kids that might mug him, or people who rape his friend Edgea…though he does in fact have plenty of "Black friends" as the saying goes. These were just the tougher crowds in his story, and it's as if it's important for him to distinguish them. Partly this is for historical accuracy, since race relations were strained in his telling of the punk scene back then. I just noticed he calls out whether someone is Black or Persian but doesn't make a point of calling out white characters. It's a classic bullshitty narration move for white authors to make and it drives me crazy. It makes such a huge assumption of who the reader is, but also shows the writer to not be thinking about what it's like to be Othered by this tactic. And I'm sick of that perspective. A lot of the Black characters are three-dimensional, and not entirely stereotypical, so that's not so much my issue, just that in the description of different people, the writer doesn't call out whiteness because ostensibly that is assumed if no other descriptor is given.

But what drives me more crazy is that there is so much detail about the day-to-day, which almost entirely consists of hanging out, driving around, or doing those two things while getting blasted, and hardly any moving action. I want to be happy for Mr. Minsker for accomplishing writing a book despite dyslexia, and I am, but it's just not much of a page-turner.

—Julia Booz

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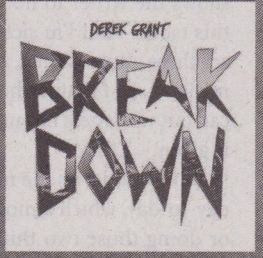

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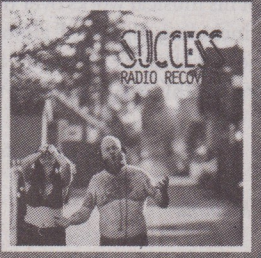

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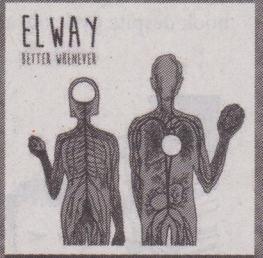

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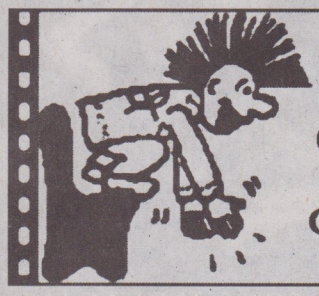

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

WE CAN'T GO SURFIN' 'CAUSE IT'S 20 BELOW

I am very surprised at my reaction to **Danny Says**. I'd be the first to complain that the behind the scenes people don't get enough credit for everything they do. Danny Fields has done a lot. Plus he is always so funny in every documentary he pops up in. He has the best comments. He does in **Danny Says,** too. However I feel like I've heard them all before. Then I realize every story he tells is about someone else. It makes sense, but it also makes for a rather dull life story. I honestly feel bad saying that because Fields has had a more interesting life than anyone.

Danny Says is the story of Danny Fields. Fields is probably most famous as the manager of the Ramones. Yet, he has been involved in many significant areas of music. He was the one who made Southern teenagers aware that John Lennon said the Beatles were bigger than Jesus by publishing the comment in a teen magazine he was editing. The incident causes protests and record burnings. The magazine also had an interesting quote from Paul that seemingly went unnoticed. Fields hung out with Andy Warhol and his gang at the Factory. He was the publicist for the Doors. He got the MC5 and the Stooges signed.

Of course, there are some great stories in **Danny Says**. Fields tried unsuccessfully to fix up Nico with Jim Morrison. They didn't hit it off. Fields took acid and later discovered Nico out by the pool screaming. Morrison was walking on the roof naked. Apparently Morrison and Fields didn't get along after this, though Fields remained the Doors' publicist. The most interesting tidbit was a cassette recording of a conversation between Lou Reed and Fields regarding the Ramones. Fields plays the Ramones first album for Reed and Reed can't say enough good things about it. You don't get to hear a complimentary Reed that much.

With all this excitement it is inexplicable that **Danny Says** is somewhat boring. I found myself worrying that the film was going on too long and I was going to miss the last train. I discreetly glanced at my phone (something I would normally never do during a movie) and only an hour had passed so I still had plenty of time. The main disadvantage of being the guy who supports the stars is that everything revolves around them, including your own life story. (dannysaysfilm.com)

On the opposite side of the spectrum is **Lee Scratch Perry's Vision Of Paradise**. Lee Scratch Perry is so weird he can't help but be interesting. He is quite a character. That he is also a musical innovator adds greatly to his story. The film follows Perry around over fifteen years starting in 1999. Perry has relocated to Switzerland and is making music in a small town in the Alps.

Lee Scratch Perry is a Jamaican born reggae music producer. He is very innovative and is known for developing dub as well as producing Bob Marley. Although he is a Rastafarian and speaks constantly of love, there is a little bitterness toward Marley that pokes out occasionally. It pops up when recalling taking Marley in when he was just starting out. The music business is a tough one.

Watching Perry work is the best aspect of **Lee Scratch Perry's Vision Of Paradise**. There is a lot of it. It is mesmerizing. My favorite scene is when he works with the Orb, an English group made up of two guys. Perry freeforms lyrics about Facebook that are very amusing. He requests one of the Orb, Alex Paterson, give him a hip-hop beat. Paterson is not sure what Perry means. Perry vocally shows him what to do, but it is not easily translated to music. Paterson is trying to mimic Perry's instructions on the keyboard with no success. Perry walks over, asks "is this the key to press?" and starts banging out the hip-hop beat himself. He knows what he wants.

Perry speaks in dub. He repeats himself three times, changing a word or phrase as he progresses. I wonder what came first the music or the speech. During **Lee Scratch Perry's Vision Of Paradise,** Perry returns to Jamaica to revisit his legendary The Black Ark studios. The studio had burned down in 1978 when Perry claims he set it on fire. While in Jamaica Perry also participates in a chanting ceremony. When a flammable liquid is poured on the fire, Perry barely jumps back before getting singed. He survives and you can't help but hope he always will. (visionofparadise.de)

To throw a wrench into this whole thing I also saw **Michael Des Barres: Who Do You Want Me To Be?** Des Barres is a minor celebrity who seemingly does not deserve a documentary about him. He might be most famous for being the husband of infamous groupie Pamela Des Barres. I know him from listening to satellite radio. He is one of the better DJs though that is the only aspect of his life not covered in this documentary. What I didn't realize before seeing the film is I also know him from other oddball things. He is one of those people who pop up in a lot of stuff.

Michael Des Barres: Who Do You Want Me To Be? starts out rather preposterously by stating that Des Barres is a French Marquis. While true it is also pretentious. He is a poor little rich kid who started out acting then wanted to become a rock star. He formed two bands in the '70s, Silverhead and Detective, who each released two records before flopping and disbanding. He made solo records. He joined Chequered Past with Steve Jones of the Sex Pistols and Clem Burke and Nigel Harrison of Blondie. He replaced Robert Palmer in Power Station when Palmer didn't want to tour. When the music thing didn't really work out he went back to acting. He has had bits parts on many well-known television shows.

Michael Des Barres is not what I would call famous. Yet, he is. It is this conundrum that keeps **Michael Des Barres: Who Do You Want Me To Be?** captivating. It is the constant state of disbelief. Why was this guy famous? That was him? He was in that? In the case of Michael Des Barres ignorance is the key. The less I know about him the more surprising his story is. (mdbmovie.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, c/o Maximum Rocknroll, *PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. carolynkeddy.com*

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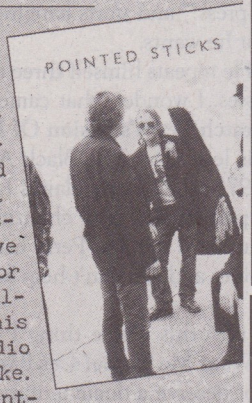

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(AP) Ari Perezdiez
(AU) Andrew Underwood
(BA) Mike Battleaxe
(BB) Brace Belden
(CK) Carolyn Keddy
(CR) Camylle Reynolds
(DG) Dan Goetz
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EW) Eli Wald
(FS) Fred Schrunk
(GA) Grace Ambrose
(GB) Graham Booth
(GH) Greg Harvester
(JD) Justin Davisson
(JK) Jon Kortland
(JM) Jeff Mason
(JR) Jason Ryan
(JU) Justin Briggs
(KC) Kyle Canyon
(KK) Kenny Kaos
(LA) Lydia Athanasopoulou
(LG) Layla Gibbon
(LP) Langford Poh
(LT) Lena Tahmassian
(MA) Matt Badenhop
(MC) Mitch Cardwell
(MH) Mike Howes
(MM) Marissa Magic
(MW) Max Wickham
(PA) Pete Avery
(RK) Ramsey Kanaan
(RL) Ray Lujan
(RM) Ryan Murphy
(RO) Rotten Ron Ready
(RW) Ryan Wells
(SZ) Shit Zoo
(WB) Will Blomquist
(WN) Robert Collins

ABNORMI – "Noidankehä" EP

A total sleeper EP that combines classic Finnish HC teeth with the cold melodies of '80s Eastern European punk. Only four tracks here, but more energy and originality than you will find on most bands' full-length platters. Vocals are stretched to their very limit, and the final track (expertly inserted into the outro of another song, by the way) demonstrates that ABNORMI are more than capable of simply ripping your face off should they choose to go that route. Lyrics are poignant and pessimistic, which is different from hopeless...but just barely. Fave track is "Virheistä Ei Opita"—there's no reason why lurching into the simple fast hardcore after that plodding melodic part should work (much less twice!) but it's absolutely perfect. Highly recommended. (WN)
(Blame The Victim / Filthy Rat)

ACTION SWINGERS – "Quit While You're Ahead" LP

Available on vinyl for the first time, this compilation of the first two singles and some early unreleased tracks from this dirty New York garage band was originally released in 1994. ACTION SWINGERS on this collection were singer/guitarist Ned Hayden and guitarist Julie Cafritz with a nice drummer pedigree of Johan Kugelberg, Don Fleming, and J Mascis. The songs are distorted and mean and come off as an angrier PUSSY GALORE. Hayden would drag the band out in different incarnations throughout the '90s. *Quit While You're Ahead* is jokingly and appropriately titled. Comes on pretty black and white splattered vinyl. (CK)
(In the Red)

AGATHOCLES / DISORDER – split 10"

It finally happened: my first AGATHOCLES split to review. I really lucked out since it comes backed with three great tracks from DISORDER that I already love from their record with STAGNATION. By all logic DISORDER shouldn't be able to make a good tune this far into this millennium, but here they are defying the odds. Simple, stupid, bouncy and noisy as usual, but with all the special DISORDER charm that pushes these songs beyond just loud, raw effluvia. All three songs would fit comfortably enough on *Under the Scalpel Blade*. The mastering job seems a bit weaker than on the STAGNATION split, although that might just be my imagination. AGATHOCLES is less mince here and it really helps make sense of the record, as they slow down the speed a touch to match the trotting, muddy 1-2 of their splitmates. If you weren't able to find a copy of the DISORDER/STAGNATION split, this is a fair enough remedy. Of course if you're an AGATHOCLES nerd (they have to be real still, right?) then you must have this. (SZ)
(Power It Up)

ALI BARBARE AND THE GRINDS – LP

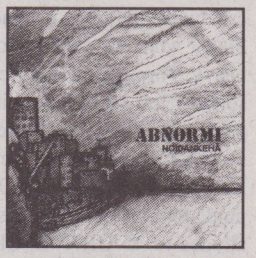
The cover's pretty crazy, with some monsters having a wild pizza party. The music's pretty much the same. ALI BARBARE AND THE GRINDS, from Marseille, France, play in a tight, quick, fun style. Catchy, short songs and group yelled vocals make this a good time. The better tracks in particular ("Get Filade," "Maroch'n'roll") are great examples of one-minute hardcore punk rock'n'roll. There's enough variance in the fourteen tracks to hold my limited attention all the way through. Yet another cool one-sided record, with an art on the flip—not as rad as the cover, though. You oughta check it out. (JM)
(Crapoulet / Navarro, no info / Rest Was Here, no info)

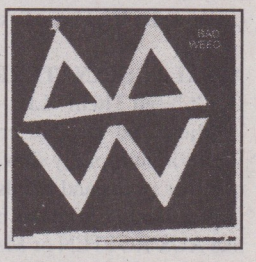
ALIEN TV / THE JIM TABLOWSKI EXPERIENCE – split LP

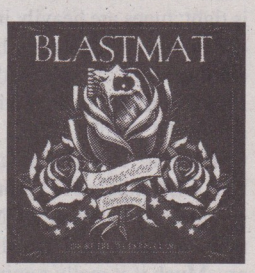
The JIM TABLOWSKI EXPERIENCE side should come with the question: "How much nasly pop punk can you take?" As for me, welp, I can typically deal with their fast tunes as they remind me of good ol' unpolished East Bay and Peninsula poppy slop like SEWER TROUT and SLOBBER. However, the gargly doofus backing vox are lame as hell. Then their slow songs, and moreso the craptastic one with the ska intro, made me wanna hurl. Aaaand I just saw RANCID in Vegas. (Ugh!) OK, this coulda been better if they gutted their best tunes down to a 7". ALIEN TV doesn't fare too much better. It's a bit cleaner sounding, happy mofo, poppy punk y'know the EpiFat/B.Y.O. deal that's probably already on a zillion skateboard video games. Count me out. Also, I have no idea why they misprinted BOTH SIDES at 45rpm when they're both 33!?! (JD)
(Blsn Wrst / Crapoulet / Huge Major Label / Kuskus / Spastic Fantastic)

ALPHABET CULT / ELEPHANT RIFLE – split EP

Reno's ALPHABET CULT is heavy and pretty raw, spaced-out yet mean stuff sorta like *Into the Vortex*-era HAMMERHEAD (US). Love the vocals, especially when they sing, "It's your body / That will deee-cay!" The back-







ing vocals are a nice added bonus, too. Simple repeated riff but the drums keep it moving forward and the soaring female vocals in the middle are really cool. ELEPHANT RIFLE is name I've read seemingly 100 times over but I finally now have heard them. They play rather heavy and doomy, NEUROSIS-y stuff with a great layer of psych and bass-y breaks. They gets right to the point and don't waste time doing that "drifty" shit so many bands have done in the last ten-plus years (looking at you KYLESA!) Even the fuck up of the labels on each band's side being flipped didn't make me enjoy this any less. (JD)
(self-released)

ANASAZI – "Nasty Witch Rock" LP

ANASAZI's highly anticipated full-length seemed to be so built up and hyped. I totally bought into that hype because their last releases, especially the ones on Sacred Bones and Toxic State, were so fucking out there spooky and heavy. Through the fog I can see glimpses of the sound I fell so in love with. The lyrical themes peak with "Hex the System," casting spells on systemic oppression and capitalism, more TEMPLE OV PSYCHICK YOUTH than your usual punk anti-state ideologies, set to a sound that alludes to 45 GRAVE, CRAMPS and that void in between anarcho-punk and post-punk. I can even attest to this actually sounding good live when they played a good chunk of this album at New York's Alright, but that live nuance is lost in the production. Everything sounds murky and lackluster, the female vocals are drowned under feedback and reverb. Save your money and see them live, and maybe cast a spell to help them make better production choices next time around. (AP)
(La Vida Es Un Mus / Toxic State)

APPALACHIAN TERROR UNIT – "We Don't Need Them" LP

Mid-paced metallic crust from the trails of West Virginia, pretty slow and melodic introduction that swells and builds to destroy. Hopefully you are familiar with this band's work; vocals are like AUS-ROTTEN or MANKIND?, production is tight; tunes are heavily influenced by the upper crust pioneers. I honestly haven't picked up a recording since the split with WARTORN. Maybe I need to take a fucking hike. That certainly had a more DISRUPT, ZERO HOUR and E.N.T. attitude to it. This is a cleaner SACRILEGE and NAUSEA influenced record. There are also a lot of currently relevant CONFLICT spoken word moments over said metallic ANTISECT delivery. Much if it really reminds me of those bands' songs. There is actually a fly circling my head as I type this, and I wonder if this review stinks, or if it just has a resilient fan base. There are a few acoustic moments and tough breakdowns. I really wanted to be blown away by this, I take this genre very seriously, but I'm not all that excited by any newness from the music. I love the lyrics, of which there are chapters. If you're down with the crust formula you will recognize a lot of *We Don't Need Them*. It stumbles over itself in charades of crust punk. Obviously APPALACHIAN TERROR UNIT love what they are doing, and that is tremendously important—if we look at a history of crust from the late '80s to right now, the DIY ethic is alive and kicking through these bands, putting forth the message and ideals that most jaded skeptics in the contemporary punk scene scoff at. I've always been more of a nature punk myself. (Not to look at me. Don't look at me.) I really do appreciate what APPALACHIAN TERROR UNIT has done here, because it is important to keep up. I'm loving the cover artwork by Stiv, in his well-known stipple style. A punk anarchist community in the forest; a dog, an axe, a fire and a stage; a van, a swing, a family—flip that crispy page. (JR)
(Profane Existence / Ruin Nation / Skuld)

BAD STROKE – "Dirty Hole" EP

There are a bunch of pictures of nutsacks and buttholes all over this record. I think that is an apt description of how this EP sounds; dirty, nasty and fuzzy, but in a way you kinda like. Lo-fi hardcore with megaphone sounding vocals. There is a kind of DEAD KENNEDYS twang to their sound minus the vocals. BAD STROKE are from Århus Denmark, but nail that sloppy twangy creepy American sound. (KC)
(Halshugga)

BAD WEED – "Hillside" EP

Wow. I always like garage rock. When it's super catchy and just a little upbeat, I like it even better. When it's mixed sort of trashy, I start to love it. It's garagey throughout. Sometimes that's sort of '60s garage. Other times it's late '70s punk garage. If the only negative thing you can think to say about a band/record is that they decided to go with one of the worst band names ever, well, that's pretty good. Homegrown Austrian garage rock! Limited to 500. (KK)
(Bachelor)

BALLROOM – 12"

Excellent NYC, uh, "burly rock" with members of BUSY SIGNALS, DEGREASER and HOME BLITZ. They must know I'm a sucker for this sort of stuff that evokes everything from MUDHONEY to UNSANE to LUBRICATED GOAT. In other words: Lots of heavy bass, driving tempos, at times twangy guitars and straightforward vocals. Lest I forget that killer wah-wah action they use on the last tune, "I'll Be Coming Back Again," which is a real monster of twisted psych-blues infected tune, Not a bummer moment *anywhere*. (JD)
(Ever Never)

BIG BUSINESS – "Battlefields Forever" LP

Playing massive sounding rock has been a very common occurrence in the last five years or so. We had waves of stoner rock, post rock, psychedelic rock, and witchy hard rock. BIG BUSINESS has been doing their brand of massive sounding rock for ten years and it doesn't fit neatly into any of the usual genre buckets. For the most part BIG BUSINESS has been just two people, one on bass and one on drums. Like a lot of their releases they do have a guitar player on a few tracks, in this case Scott Martin (400 BLOWS, CROM). The bass often sounds like a guitar, the drums will pummel you into the ground and the vocals are very melodic. Most things Jared Warren has played with KARP, TIGHT BROS FROM WAY BACK WHEN and the WHIP carry his signature driving bass and unique vocals and COADY WILLIS is no stranger to rock, playing in MURDER CITY DEVILS and DEAD LOW TIDE. I've always loved their sound and this record is no different with slight touches of metal, in particular on the opening track on Side B "Aurum." It has such an '80s metal vibe which runs into maybe my favorite track on this record, "Doomsday. Today!" which is likely about those who predict the end of the world. "End of the world! / Making the dream come true." "Heavy Shoes" has a slightly different sound with different and multiple vocalists and honestly reminds of QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE if run through a heavy BIG BUSINESS blender. Wonderful stuff as usual. (MH)
(Gold Metal)

BLACK TIME – "Aerial Gobs of Love" LP

All hail BLACK TIME, architects of the brutal and arcane…Transporting the listener to the collapsing concrete shopping centers of London, in which girls and boys as informed as much by the Medway Sound as the Situationist ideal hack out a new / old existence in the ashes of commerce. What other group could summon thoughts of HUGGY BEAR, SWELL MAPS, early Michigan garage sounds, Musique Concrète, girls in bootleg Mary Quant / Bridget Riley get ups reading Sheila Delaney's teenage works…BLACK TIME is the way and the truth. The sound of irate bedroom masterworks—when Lemmy Caution shouts he's got no expectations you can feel that tool Jagger's smug sprawl of expectations slowly eating away at the earth… Janey Too-bad's voice on the title track makes me wanna grab a Silvertone and join the WHAT FOUR (or the MOD 4). Anyway this is a piercing, shambling, devastating view into two years of bedroom recordings by London's only garage band (who no longer exist, but word on the street is the MIDNIGHT MINES is a new and related endeavor). Tascam truths for sped up troublemakers. (LG)
(Föbjudna Ljud)

BLASTMAT – "Broke Life. Working Class" CD

If you've gotten into a fight with a dude at a show recently, this is probably what his band sounds like. Nine songs that jump around in genre and recording quality. The songs range from NYHC to crossover thrash to chorus pedal death rock circle pit riffs and the vocal levels are

different for every song. All of the lyrics are Oi! inspired working class anthems. This whole thing is pretty cheesy but whatever, catch them opening for PENNYWISE at a bar near you. (KC)
(United Riot)

BLAZING EYE – "No Outside" EP

Most *MRR* readers—and probably all North American punks—should be well aware of BLAZING EYE by now; they do the dark pogo-able HC thing better than anybody else, taking cues from ZOUO and GASMASK in terms of memorable songwriting and menacing vocals. This EP came out stateside late in 2014 but quickly ran through its first pressing (though these songs were already on a tape from earlier in the year as well). Now the rest of the world has a fairer chance with this LVEUM release. I feel like enough praise has been hurled at BLAZING EYE so I won't try too hard to come up with anything new, but shit, they deserve it. (SZ)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

BÖRN – "Engan Skal Hungra" EP

I saw BÖRN a few weeks ago where I picked up my own copy of this record and have been flipping it over and over ever since. They come from Reykjavik, Iceland and play dark post-punk / goth-influenced punk. My big problem with newer goth-style punk is that a lot of the bands seem to be trying to emulate a certain '80s era (which usually sucked the first time around) and forget to inject their music with energy and enthusiasm. No problems here. BÖRN plays a severe style with the bass and drums forming an airtight unit that allows for the guitar and vocalist to just go off. The guitar work is mostly sparse, making space to create an anxious mood…a perfect "less is more" style. Their singer is using her voice to propel each song into a breathless frenzy that somehow sounds both cold and invigorating. The whole record feels cohesive in a way that is oddly satisfying…each song is a smaller part of the whole. I wish I knew what the songs were about, but that's my problem for not knowing Icelandic. This is a perfect addition to their near flawless LP. (GH)
(Paradisarborgarplötur / Total Negativity)

BROKEN COGS – "Hitch the Noose" EP

When I say "pub punk" band you probably know exactly what I'm talking about. BROKEN COGS are typical pub punk band, playing a melodic brand of hardcore. All the songs are easily digestible political-ish songs. That's one of the problems about growing old, you can't write a good political song anymore. Well, that's not true. If you're an activist, you can probably write a good political punk song after age 35. But if you're just some dude whose political action doesn't go any farther than complaining on a bar stool, reposting stuff on Facebook, and writing punk songs, your lyrics are gonna be boring. I'm not disagreeing with the reality of global warming or hypocrisy of organized religion. These are important issues. It's one of things (like running and remembering stuff) that you get worse at as you get older. But you should also bear in mind that pub punk bands get much better the more you have to drink. And I (listener and writer) am stone sober at the moment. After a few stiff drinks, I could be pogo-ing my brains out to this record, who knows. (FS)
(Brassneck)

BRUDTE LØFTER – "København" EP

Three songs from this Copenhagen group, pretty basic punk with moderate overdrive on the guitars and straightforward drums. There's almost a CRAMPS-like quality to how creepy crawly the opening track "København" is, but only if you take out the garage-y surf elements of the CRAMPS and replace that with cowbell and deep, throaty vocals. The other two songs are a little more straightforward hardcore, but a pretty dumbed down sterile version of hardcore and there's still fucking cowbell. The vocals are in Danish but you're probably not missing out on that much. (KC)
(Halshugga)

BUMMER'S EVE – "Fly on the Wall/Blue"

Self-described space rippers play airy odes to insects and sadness. This group could play your shitty local or a Burgerfest and not bum anyone out. Catchy but not very memorable garage with intergalactic effects, and lyrics that wouldn't be out of place on an ALL record. (LG)
(Almost Ready)

BUNNYGRUNT – "Vol. 4" CD

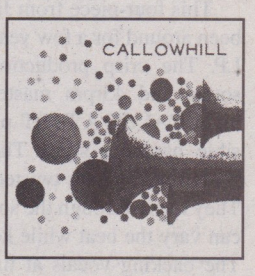
Never heard of these folks before this gem landed on my desk (so to speak), but sure am real glad to make their acquaintance. Apparently, they're a sort of legendary (in a very small way) indie-pop/rock band, whose main claim to fame is that one of their songs back in the day (like in the '90s) was used in a Billy Bob Thornton pic. Regardless, this is a fantastic effort. Lots of indie pop and rock, for sure. But lots of power pop too, and '70s rock (à la CHEAP TRICK), and even some bona fide punk'n'roll. Eclectic and awesome in every way. Like a LEMONHEADS greatest hits. Just better. (RK)
(HHBTM)

CALLOWHILL – "Philly or the Seashore/Rotations"

This is a straight indie rock record. It has some nods to the '90s, like something out of the Simple Machines catalogue but it certainly has a modern feel. Both songs are defined by the lead vocals competing with simple lead guitar melodies for all the attention while the rest of the song sits in the background. The A-side is a slower number that has some catchy moments but also some downfalls. The main riff of the verse has a cool guitar part that alternates between very stiff and a lazy, pretty meander. Unfortunately the vocals follow it exactly, making it sound a bit boring. As the song gets louder, they really fall into what works, pulling out sparse vocals and rehashing an earlier guitar line that lends to slight head nodding and some rocking back and forth. The B-side is up-tempo and the male vocalist takes the lead here. It's a similar formula but the guitars feel a little crunchier on the loud parts and it sounds a little more like R.E.M. on the quiet parts. This song also shines more light on the issue of that simple lead guitar melody being way too loud in the mix and drowning out much of the rest of the band. Not the greatest record but it could be the start of something. (PA)
(Exotic Fever)

CASUAL NAUSEA / CHEWED UP – split CD

Ska-core still lives in the UK and here's some proof. Musically—and in spirit—this is not too far removed from CHOKING VICTIM, or at least how I recall CHOKING VICTIM. CHEWED UP hit some '90s crust notes, while CASUAL NAUSEA have the dual-vocal street punk thing



going on. Both bands, in equal measure, vacillate between politically earnest and sarcastically adolescent themes. As a younger person I had TRAILER TRASH UK, so I can't deny that these bands are probably inspiring dozens of local punkers to hate society. If you told me this was from 15 years ago, I wouldn't doubt it for a second. (SZ)
(Uncomfortable Beach Party, no info)

CAT JELLY – CD

Some quirky assed weirdness from Reno. At first, I wasn't into it one bit. It all seemed uninspired and just thrown together, but I think they just put their two throwaway songs up front. The final four songs unleash an awesome, weird, reverb-drenched, surfy darkness, that I really dig. Kind of like if LA LUZ wasn't so dreamy, but really into cats...and probably weed. (DZ)
(Intruder Alert! Intruder Alert!)

CAUSE A RIOT – "Pawns Of War" LP

This four-piece from Järvenpää, Finland have been around for a few years, and this is their first LP. The crisp production, everything-up-front sound and 45rpm mastering keep the energy high. CAUSE A RIOT play a tough but accessible hardcore style. The vocals are shouted, sometimes getting twisted into an ugly squawk. They move through the songs at a good pace, and can vary the beat while keeping the tempo high. The backing vocals at times are over-polished, and the guitar harmonics on "Heads Up High" didn't work for me. "The New King Is Crowned" is a high point—concise, tight and raging. "One By One" mixes their strengths with the detriment of over-production, ending up a little on the slick side. The lyrics are in English, calling them out and tellin' us to keep going, but exactly who us and them are, what they did and what to do, is left vague. If you like your hardcore in a youth center with a killer p.a., look into this. (JM)
(self-released)

CELL BLOCK 5 / FABULOUS DISASTER – split CD

A two-song split CD. CELL BLOCK 5 does a punky version of the WHO's "The Kids Are Alright." Good version with a late '70s UK punk vibe. FABULOUS DISASTER is an all-women band that was on Fat Records in the '00s. They do a good pop punk song à la the EYELINERS and TILT. (RL)
(Hella Mad)

CEMETERY – "Wind & Shadows" LP

The CEMETERY demo that dropped in 2011 blew more than a few minds. They weren't necessarily on the front end of the whole goth/dark punk resurgence, but they managed to sound completely original and avoided getting pigeonholed. And now, years after that initial release, this Chicago outfit has delivered something really special with their self-titled large platter. Guitars tweaked and tortured land somewhere south of shoegaze while breathy vocals spurt and stutter and the rhythm section kicks dark dust in the face of your calculated reinterpretations of a decade that was gone before you were here. "Wind & Shadows" is the closest you're going to get to a hit—DEATH CULT groove and guitars and a perfectly lazy flanged bass line instantly give way to desperation and depression when the vocals step in and spin the guitars into a mild tornado hovering over the frame of the track. It can be hard to pull this off, but CEMETERY reset the bar instead of just stepping over it. Great record, as expected. (WN)
(Inflammable Material / Mass Media)

CHROME CRANKS – LP

Second time around for this CHROME CRANKS debut from '94. This thing seemed to be everywhere at the time, and it's good to see it sitting in stores again. It always seemed to be getting airplay from the clerks back then, which is the real test as to whether a record is any good: people who are stuck listening to promo garbage all day chose your record for their "break," essentially. The SCIENTISTS influence is way more apparent in 2015 but only in a grinning way, like if that band had tossed the keys to these guys on their way out of town; "You take it from here." The wailing vocals and swamp-guitar have become a funereal poem for a NYC Lower East Side that is now a miasma of distressed wood, very expensive vomit, and stone-faced Russian billionaires...and their distressed mistresses. Easily one of the best of the punk rock urban-blooze efforts (which is a short list), and if you act fast you get a bonus 7" of these guys covering the Ork label TELEVISION debut. They do a great job of converting the spidery guitar sound of the original into their distinctive dirge. This is worth cash money. (RW)
(HoZac)

CLEAN GIRLS – "Despite You" LP

This is the second record assigned to me this month with cloaked figures featured on the sleeve. Never a good omen. Honestly, unless you are some truly dark, evil motherfucker that must be shrouded at all times, don't tell me cloaked figures represent your band. Anyway, I have heard mention that this band plays "noise-rock." Alas, one must be leery of this moniker especially when someone attempts to tell you that a new SWANS record is somehow relevant in the year 2015. CLEAN GIRLS seem to be tackling the genre from the wrong angle for my taste, i.e. metal. Yes, one of the songs has the JESUS LIZARD beat, but I really cannot forgive the unfortunate use of the drop tuning. The male/female vocals make for a kind of lo-tech version of KYLESA. Perhaps Southern Lord will call and then I will be proven wrong once and for all. (JK)
(Accidental Guest)

CLOCKED OUT – LP

What if the STOOGES, DROPDEAD, SIEGE and LOS CRUDOS melded together into an H-bomb? Then you'd get CLOCKED OUT. Violent and militant beats deliver insane blasts of relentless hardcore with a refreshing non-stop Neanderthal drumbeat. This record does not let up. The guitars and bass move at a much more stylish pace than the drums and tortured mongrel vocals, making for a dynamic arrangement of tones. Listening to this you wonder who should stay and who should go? All of the pieces are reminiscent of different genres. So, duh, they're all here to stay. But the guitar and bass need to decide who's going to lead and who's going to support. The drums are barbaric and I really like the low-fi pop of the snare. Also, compliments to these folks from Glasgow, as this is not the typical style for almost anywhere in Europe. It definitely has a US scaffolding-swinging basement style to it, and the ultra aggressive music is too legit to quit. Basically, get drooling over this, you hardcore buffoon. You are the missing link and there is a space left out from this recording just for you. Goodbye! (JR)
(SuperFi / At War With False Noise / SPHC)

COLOSTOMY BAGUETTE? / HADES MINING CO. – split 3" EP

HADES MINING CO. delivers fifteen seconds of stupidity: a sample from a golf announcer followed by a nonsensical solo. COLOSTOMY BAGUETTE? delivers nineteen seconds of stupidity: a sample followed by some blown-out heavy electronic grind followed by some heavy electronic doom (I think there's another sample in there as well). Custom 3" lathe cut vinyl that you have to adjust your stylus to play, limited to 97 copies (obviously), comes with a download code (of course). (WN)
(Continuum)

CONQUEST FOR DEATH / FLIPOUT A.A. – split EP

Rad, fast hardcore from Japan's FLIPOUT A.A. who blaze through their five songs in no time. Mau's vocals are really energetic and have a neat phrasing. The guitars are ace—as it's easy to see that Hitoshi might have a strong metal background or has even played in a metal band. Overall, their songs mix the best of traditional hardcore and fastcore like HERESY and well, I dunno, you can figure out the rest. Love the "Final Countdown" cover in their "stupid outro," too. CONQUEST FOR DEATH's side is also good and much of this is sung in Japanese and English. Their two songs have a great crossover vibe with the thick riffs of Craigums and really good sing-along parts all over. "Having Delivered the Bomb" deals with a WWII-era Japanese invasion of the island of Tinian in the Pacific. Really cool mix of mid-paced HC and wailing, *dual leads*! Their second song "Same Headlines, Different Centuries" is a bit so-so but nothing awful. I at least like that they're doing something more challenging, and I'm sure it was fun shouting out all those country names and current events. (JD)
(625 Thrash)

CORROSIVE / YACØPSÆ – split 6" EP

A short and sweet release from these two German bands. Four short tracks of fast hardcore and grindcore. YACØPSÆ continues their wonderful run with two assaults of grindcore. Blistering fast, walking that line where it becomes noise yet you can still hear the songs. CORROSIVE on the other side play a heavy hardcore with touches of powerviolence. I hear a tiny bit of LACK OF INTEREST. Burley understandable vocals and straight forward hardcore riffs and breakdowns that will have you headbanging. I love the YACØPSÆ tracks. Give this one a listen. (MH)
(Fucking Kill / Power It Up)

COUNTDOWN TO ARMAGEDDON / DUESENJAEGER – split EP

DUESENJAEGER's track is a melancholic and driving number with a forcefully-spoken verse and deeply sung chorus, reminiscent of EA80 or DIE STRAFE. Seattle's COUNTDOWN TO ARMAGEDDON offer up a dense and emotive cut of thick bass and a morose howl. If you took an upbeat NEW MODEL ARMY song that was meant to be played at 45 but played it on 33, it might sound like this. Both bands contribute strong material and are a pretty good match for each other. (MA)
(Grabeland / Aborted Society)

CYMEON X – "Animal Friendly" LP

Anthemic (if you can speak Polish), metallic, vegan edge core from this Polish band that has been at it since 1991(?)—heaving on the mid-paced, chugging groove with little to no thrashing. The focus here is heavy to on the side of veganism/animal rights, straightedge, eco-mental, and remaining present-minded. I'm sure most people will say it comes off as preachy, but I find it quite refreshing, in the era of "punk" bands in constant struggle to out-nihilst each other by showing how little they care about anything and everything, to encounter actual convictions from grown ass adults that haven't sunk to the bacon-as-a-condiment post-life-as-a-punker phase. (JU)
(Refuse)

CYMEON X / REGRES – split EP

On this EP, CYMEON X wrap up a solid career as the premier Polish HC band, epitomizing '90s straightedge commitment and sound twenty plus years into it. The band plays out their swan song with friends REGRES in celebration of the latter's fifteen-year anniversary. While CYMEON X have paved the way for bands like GOVERNMENT FLU, VICIOUS REALITY and IRON TO GOLD in Poland's thriving scene, their final track is complemented by a cover of a REGRES song, "Full of Faith", that is sung by ten-year-old REGRES family member Nikodem and THUGXLIFE vocalist Wilk. REGRES continue their reign of melodic, moshable hardcore to dog pile, finger point and two step to while covering CYMEON X's "Chcę Twojej Przyjaźni" in prime form. A solid split end to end and a bittersweet release for those who know how important CYMEON X has been and why their presence continues to be so crucial to the eastern European scene. Glad to know and see that there are lifers like REGRES to carry the torch. (RM)
(Refuse)

DAWN OF HUMANS – "Slurping at the Cosmos Spine" LP

An ugly record. As far divorced from the mid-2000s hardcore revival shit as you can get, and lightyears beyond the Mysterious Guy Hardcore bullshit that came after. Less songs, a deeply *weird* document. Not for 7 SECONDS fans. No singles from this LP, but that makes sense. If you're in desperate need of a comparison, think a freak-hardcore HUMAN EYE or TIMMY'S ORGANISM. (BB)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

DEADSTOOLPIGEON / MANLIFTINGBANNER – "The Kids Will Have Their Fuel" split EP

How many of your favorite records are covers EPs? I have one, but in general it's not a crucial format. The reformed MANLIFTINGBANNER goes after two old school songs, "Nothing Done" (SSD) and "Race Against Time" (CHARGED GBH). I haven't investigated their newer material, and I was never into SSD, but their version of "Race Against Time" is pretty strong musically and lyrically. (Yes, lyrics to all songs are provided—an important touch for a project like this.) DEADSTOOLPIGEON has been gone for almost 20 years. They had the singer and bassist from MANLIFTINGBANNER but a more mid-tempo, catchy, heavy style. These recordings are from 1996, and both songs, "Commitment" (ALONE IN A CROWD) and "True Blue" (UNDERDOG) sound great, with the distinctive DEADSTOOLPIGEON sound. While hardly mandatory, three outta four is still pretty good. (JM)
(Refuse)

DEARLY DIVIDED – CD

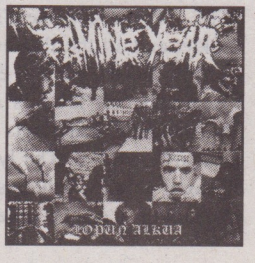
A new local band that sounds a hell of a lot like early FACE TO FACE. Maybe a bit of early ATARIS as well as STRUNG OUT on the up-tempo numbers. I liked this for its energy and the nice musical chops. The vocals can get a bit monotone at times but not so much to bring this down. Decent tunes make this a pop punk/melodic hardcore keeper. (RL)
(45th Parallel / Morning Wood)

DER FADEN – "Best Guess/Filaments"

Sort of power poppy, sort of mod, this is a strong 7". It's catchy and mid-tempo, which say power pop. But it's also got that lead guitar in the background sort of doing its own thing, which says mod. However you want to label it, it's damn good and it's delivered with great confidence, which always makes a difference. The male/female vocals playing off of each other is just a bonus. This is a band to keep an eye on. (KK)
(Dirt Cult)

DESERT OF TOMORROW – CD

On a cursory listen, DESERT OF TOMORROW crank out relatively simple 1-2-1-2 punk tunes; riffs plodding on one root note and then meandering through verses, all led by shouted (definitely not sung), melodic female vocals. There is a discordance to the bass that brings to mind colder post-punk bands, but that just scratches the surface of the vibe that this Tokyo band creates on their 2013 debut full-length. A lot of it is the vocals—the shouts are shrill and insistent—but there's a something here that goes beyond a difference in sound, there's a difference in feeling that's being held captive by a straightforward punk construct. They start to show their hand a few tracks in as the songs get a little stranger and the vocal arrangements start to take charge, and



then bits of world music start creeping in, and then taking over. The instrumental track "Raqs D.Ö.T." seems to be the turning point where you feel like you are listening to something genuinely different, punk musicians jamming on some weird spatial plane, but then comes the eight minute opus "I•B•M" and you're in the fukkn desert with these punks...difficult to describe *how* they transport, but when a song descends into a Egyptian percussion solo, well, you're going places. "Correspondance" follows, a slow and deliberate shuffle that maintains tension for its entire length, easily my favorite track on the record. Two burners close out the disc, sounding more like early Japanese punk than anything else seemed to and all I can do is marvel at how well DESERT OF TOMORROW have gone so far outside of convention while staying so punk. Super interesting release...and I figure it's worth mentioning that the band has members of LIP CREAM, LAUGHIN' NOSE, ABURAKADO, and the NURSE. (WN)
(ANKH)

DESERT OF TOMORROW – "A Hardcore Date With Neko" CD

Hoo boy, this is a weird one. Based on the packaging you'd be forgiven for assuming that this was some kind of terrible Arabic electronica fusion World Music nonsense. Turns out it's members of LIP CREAM/ABURADAKO/the NURSE and GAUZE (!) teamed up with one of Japan's premier practitioners of belly dance (!!) to produce an album that touches on everything from stripped-down hardcore to bubblegum pop with some touches that touch on Middle Eastern melodies as well. It's very theatrical music, at times downright strange, and it has a lot more in common with CIBO MATTO than any of the ex-members' bands listed above though the album does start out with three pretty good, if misleading, punk songs and returns to the style for "One Bit Error," probably my favorite track. This is definitely not a record for hardcore purists, but I can't say that I wasted my time listening to it at all. A very puzzling but frequently enjoyable listen. (AU)
(ANKH)

THE DESTRUCTORS — "Politika II" CD

"You obviously haven't been at Maximum very long if you haven't heard a DESTRUCTORS CD yet." Thanks, Floyd. Anyway I guess this is in the running for the best CD this month by a punk band north of London with a massive discography and only one original member. It's actually a better-assembled package than the FALL CD we got: there's a 20-page full-color booklet and all the Photoshop work (politicians with pig heads, etc.) is even pretty well done. The production level is also pretty high here. Rackmounted delay units and compressors were certainly involved. The lyrical theme is English electoral politics, which is not a subject I understand. Do you elect people to the House of Commons? Do English punks vote? Are they allowed to? Who owes whom a living? They cover the CRASS song and write incisive and satirical lyrics about the whole process but I still do not know the answer to any of these questions. I'm just going to talk shit about all the metadata and trivia here because the music is not very good. Sorry. (EW).
(Rowdy Farrago)

THE DIRTERS – "Soap on a Rope" CD

This Finnish band has been around for fifteen years. Rootsy rock and roll and punk here. This is pub music. Sometimes this sounds like the BLASTERS or X and at other times it reminds me of TENPOLE TUDOR. These guys sound like a fun band live with the beers flowing. (RL)
(self-released)

DOWNTOWN BOYS – "Full Communism" LP

This is a seamless melding of so many punk touchstones. It's X-RAY SPEX raised on hardcore and these saxophones (double fucking saxophones!) sound so LORA LOGIC and the rage in every moment is palpable and focused. It's cathartic and faces the worst a capitalist, racist, sexist, classist (and so on) society can shit onto the world and finds joy in the action of confrontation and discussion and standing up for shit. The world is bleak and the subject matter of these songs is bleak but this record definitely isn't bleak. This manages to be triumphant without being anthemic and heavily opinionated without being preachy. The lyrics fluctuate between Spanish and English, there are moments that speed up to breakneck paces and then moments that have enough space to dance in, cherry-picking the best sounds of punk and blending them into something purely exciting. This record is incredibly fucking good, an undeniably perfect punk record. (MM)
(Don Giovanni)

DVA MINUTA MRŽNJE – "Došao Je Kraj" EP

Cream-of-the-crop Serbian punk from 1984 with a strong Oi! influence. No Plan Records has done us a fine service here, as this EP was originally released in an unsatisfactory amount of 100 copies back in '95, and most online sellers seemingly wouldn't let a copy go for less than a couple hundred bucks. (Trust me, I've been after a one for years!) These four cuts are full-sounding, burly, and gruff punk with huge infectious choruses and melodic guitar leads. Imagine classics like BLITZ and CAMERA SILENS but with that unmistakable Balkan flair. Timeless material, perfect for dancing, singing along, and will easily stand out from the pack on your next mixtape. I seriously can't recommend this (and their other EP on No Plan) enough! (MA)
(No Plan)

DVA MINUTA MRŽNJE – "Sudije" EP

DVA MINUTA MRŽNJE ("Two Minutes Hate") was an early '80s Yugo band who I know nothing about. (I only know that much by cheating and looking at the internet here at *MRR* headquarters.) This is a reissue of their 1984 EP. You don't really need to know jack to enjoy some fine streetpunk equipped with a union steel set of balls. Ultra slow and mid-tempo. Simple for the smart working class Yugo yob. Shades of the 4-SKINS in their prime and glory. The singer has the best gruff two-packs-a-day skinhead voice. Like being duct-taped to a chair in an Eastern European dungeon covered with spit and slime while interrogated. All in a day's wage. Cheers. (RO)
(No Plan)

EPA – EP

Sloppy bashing UK-style crusty hardcore, akin to EXTREME NOISE TERROR. They pull off some songs better than others, but they often lack the intensity that they're going for. Some of this is all right, but it kind of sounds like DOOM at their first practice. Features a slick, all-black record sleeve with three rectangles cut out of it, and no words. How cryptic. (BA)
(EPA)

ESPERANZA – "The Beginning" EP

Melodic streetpunk or I guess UK82 or whatever shit you want to call the music you liked as a kid. It's from *Japan* so I'm sure some folks'll buy it because of that, but there's really nothing great going on here. I put it on, I took it off, and now I'm going to live the rest of my life in crystalline perfection. (BB)
(Todo Destruido)

EYE FOR AN EYE – "Głos" EP

This is not the better-known '80s Boston band, but rather a slick but decent Polish melodic hardcore band that has been playing for almost twenty years. The first side bears a strong resemblance to the first two MODERN LIFE IS WAR records, in terms of riff similarities and overall feeling, though these songs are much more straightforward and vary more in speed. The second side has three songs that are distinguished from each other, but are more in a melodic '90s punk via late '80s NYHC sort of vein, with the final song following a more identifiable youth crew formula, a cool ending to the record. The vocals are mostly clean yelling, but she does sing a bit with decent effect, and the rest of the band frequently provides backups. (DG)
(BlackWednesday / Campary / Refuse)

THE FALL – "Sub-Lingual Language" CD

The FALL is one of the greatest musical excursions in the history of time, but who wouldn't rather listen to *Live at the Witch Trials* than whatever the current lineup could come up with!? The cover looks like a homemade Christmas card made on a computer from 1991: 59 different free-

fonts.com fonts and some generic creative commons photos of a security camera and some pills. Early FALL records have some of the sickest graphic design of any records ever in the history of sound so it's a little disconcerting to see, but there it is. Old age!? The first song on this CD made me wanna turn it off immediately. This band is fucking *terrible*. Sludgy, slurred *grunge* guitar sound, drums that sound like 50 piccolo snares with a falling apart M.E.S drawling over it in a death's door manner. But not giving up on the FALL is always the best idea, as this gets progressively better and better the further you go, and by the end of it I was enjoying it and extolling its virtues to a crowded room. The songs get wilder and more interesting, like lurching into a party and hearing 50 different things at once that somehow make sense as a cohesive whole…Anyway, the first song on this is called "Venice With the Girls" and it is human feces in musical form, but by the time you get a couple tracks past it you are in wholly new musical territory, which is in fact the same territory that this group has trod for over 30 years at this point. You probably already know if you want to investigate. (LG)
(Cherry Red)

FAMINE YEAR – "Lopun Alkua" EP

This is a straight end times rager! Nothing nice about this package, you may have to be committed to the chaos to really enjoy these Finnish anthems but the quality of unhinged hardcore permeates this release. From screams to beats to leads, these songs are a wild ride through the thrash consciousness that is to crush, kill and destroy! A fast and mighty release that has enough texture to keep me interested and intrigued! (RM)
(Make A Difference, Build A Pipe Bomb)

FATIGUE – "Bat Face" EP

This is the vinyl debut from a crew of local cretins who have been doing their time in various bands around here for years. Four tracks of stripped down, thick-necked punk. Most recently, you might remember vocalist Carl from the SYDNEY DUCKS. While I was a fan of that band, I feel that the heavier hardcore sound of FATIGUE is a much better match for his vocal style. Drummer Isaac has a heavy foot but keeps the pace under control so that rhythm wins out over speed, giving the songs that much more power. Reminiscent of the electrifying first stirrings from FUCKED UP or even CRIMINAL DAMAGE at times. Watching for more good things from this band. (AM)
(Warthog Speak)

FLEABITE – "T.T.Y.L." EP

This is my first introduction to FLEABITE and they remind me of those bands you'd hear on the radio in the '90s that never really had a hit, but were always better than all the popular bands, not unlike VERUCA SALT or the FIGGS. Like, they write totally solid, guitar heavy, mid-tempo, hook-filled pop songs that have enough grit to pull in all the broken hearted punks in the room. Some more contemporary comparisons I could make would be ALL DOGS and TRY THE PIE. Four solid songs about being an outcast, being broken-hearted, losing your mind and feeling unsure of everything. Total Mercury in retrograde-style punk. (GH)
(Puzzle Pieces)

FLESH WORLD – "Just To Tear Me Down/Poolside Boys (Remix)"

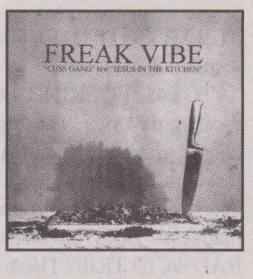
This is an impossibly limited teaser for the eagerly anticipated new FLESH WORLD LP, *The Wild Animals In My Life*. Their mini-LP on La Vida Es Un Mus was one of my favorite records of last year so I was excited to get this single on the decks. I'm sure you can read a breathlessly enthusiastic review of the whole album right next to this one in these here pages, but if you're a new visitor to the World of Flesh, you can expect jagged, shoegazey post-punk, with damaged guitar from Scott Moore of LIMP WRIST and the dreamily melancholic vocals of Jess Scott from BRILLIANT COLORS. Both songs appear on the album but the remix of "Poolside Boys" by producer Don Pyle adds a more experimental sound to the mix while doing nothing to conceal the infectious melody. (AM)
(Iron Lung)

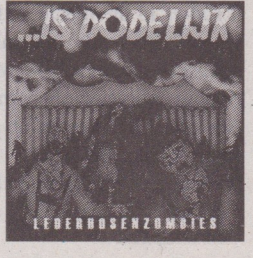
FLESH WORLD — "The Wild Animals in My Life" LP

I should probably disclose that FLESH WORLD might have already been my favorite San Francisco band before I heard this record. So I may be going into this review a little biased. But who among us wouldn't be? Even you, reader, have probably been acquainted with them already, by last month's interview in this magazine for instance, or maybe through their frequent appearances in monthly and yearly top-ten lists here. For the new record I would have been perfectly satisfied with eight tracks that sounded like their debut 12", but they've taken steps to change things up here. For one, guitarist Scott Moore adds some synth textures to a few songs here, which within the scope of Don Pyle's production is perfectly subtle. If you have a friend who decries the presence of any synthesizer as New Wave and False; don't tell them, they may not even notice. If you're less insecure in your punk predilections, you may appreciate the oscillation between the desperate drive of "To Lose Me" and the WAKE-like textures of the title track. Everything you love about FLESH WORLD is here; Diane Anastasio's minimal but forceful drumming, Moore's florid guitar leads, Jess Scott's 12-string jangle and uncannily catchy melodies. We're all significantly bummed out about this band's potential hiatus, with their drummer moving away, but as the last track slowly shifts into some minimal electronic snaps and clicks we can at least retain some hope of Jess and Scott starting the only post-punk techno project that really matters, right? In their interview here they discussed what continues to make San Francisco a place worth living in, but their music itself makes a pretty strong case. I've said it before and I'll say it again: get a 12-string guitar and leave everything else behind. (EW)
(Iron Lung)

FREAK VIBE – "Cuss Gang/Jesus in the Kitchen"

If, like me, you have seen this band live two or three times already (they're from Seattle but seem to be touring at least six months out of the year, naturalized citizens of the American highway system) both of the songs on this single should sound pretty familiar by the time you drop the needle. Having gotten that preview I was expecting more sloppy CRAMPS worship rites, but these tracks actually sound more zoned out, if not cleaner, now that they're on the record. Somehow the huffing and slobbering BIRTHDAY PARTY stomp ends up sounding more like the delirious late '80s UK lost-in-space rock of LOOP or the early





TELESCOPES singles. The B-side, "Jesus in the Kitchen," sounds more on track with the SCIENTISTS in tone. I wasn't sure what they were going for lyrically on that one until I realized that the song was about that relatable Northwestern experience of transubstantiation where you end up going into a greasy diner and having your food prepared by a long-haired, full-bearded, and otherwise messianic white man. Into that vibe. (EW)
(CV Recs)

FUBAR / TOTAL FUCKING DESRUCTION – split EP

TOTAL FUCKING DESTRUCTION totally fucking destroys. These guys sound like a psychotic grindcore videogame soundtrack. Crazy fast spastic drums, cool '80s SLAYER parts, and trippy vocal weirdness equals total fucking madness. Does anybody remember that band BAD ACID TRIP? These guys are kind like that. FUBAR brings us some heavy as fuck, pummeling grind that stays true to its hardcore roots. Fast and intense, but they also know haw to get a little groovy when they need to. ASSÜCK comes to mind but with more hardcore breakdowns. Excellent record, get this and get crazy. (BA)
(Give Praise / Power it Up)

GAS CHAMBER – "Stained Hand" EP

These progressive Buffalo punkers have been turning a lot of heads recently (pun intended) with their left-field take on hardcore, and this record makes it all too easy to see why. The titular track starts out as a meandering, sunbaked slice of anarcho-psych, taking its sweet time before cascading into a cacophonous whirl that is at once ripping and dreamy. The B-side is just as fierce, with desert vibes that would make the MEAT PUPPETS proud, and they even manage to pull off an instrumental track on a hardcore 7"! Getting more mileage out of a chorus pedal than just about any band in contemporary punk (R.I.P. LIFEFORM), I could see this getting filed under the ever-so-saturated banner of "melodic crust," but this is simply too fuckin' *weird* to squeeze into any generic microniche. Cheers to GAS CHAMBER and SPHC for another solid fuck off to hardcore conformity. (WB)
(SPHC)

GENITAL JIGGLING – "Golden Rule" 12"

Start/stop hardcore/thrash from France. Fortunately these monkeys seem to have moved away from some of the really shitty lyrics on the last platter and are looking to determination and frustration for their inspiration…and I like to think it shows in the music. A few misguided "whoa-whoas" are really my only complaint with this release, otherwise, *Golden Rule* is a furiously ripping collection of creamers crammed onto one side of a 12"…keep it up and (hopefully) keep it smart, punks. (WN)
(Crapoulet / Emergence / Stupid Kids)

GETS WORSE / HENRY FONDA – split 12"

Would be remiss if I did not mention the presentation of this split—lock grooves, reverse grooves, screened on both sides of the wax, pics of the tour shirt front/back as the front/back cover…the thing just looks sick as hell so good job. Fortunately, it also sounds sick as hell. HENRY FONDA is crushing downtuned HC/PV, dual vocals and devastating low end. Good when they play fast, and really good when they slow down. GETS WORSE also utilizes two vocalists, also tune down and pummel you…but they also blast like motherfukkrs. A rare case of the contents being every bit as good as the packaging. (WN)
(Nerdcore)

GREYFELL – "Vol. 1: I Got the Silver" LP

I got about five seconds into this record and thought, "I better smoke another jammer." GREYFELL brings us some boring '70s proto metal worship. The riffs are weak, the vocals aren't mean enough, and the HAWKWIND jams just don't freak me out, man. I wish these guys were gritty or scary or at least over the top batshit crazy. But no, just some dudes that like to play stoney riffs. These guys would be well advised to get into trucker speed and 211. Real hessians destroy their lives for the music. (BA) (Emergence / Guru / Terrain Vague)

HADES MINING CO. / SLOTH – split EP

I reviewed another HADES MINING CO. split a few issues back and I talked a bunch of shit 'cause it was dumb and I hated it. This time their side is one song called "Born in a Dumpster," and I was not excited to dive in. This is some completely fucked noise sludge that channels the angst of some kind of strung out mutant puppy that was born behind a dog food factory (in a dumpster, of course). I must say, I kind of dig it. Sure it's stupid, but it's also agonizing, and savage as fuck. I'm sold! The SLOTH side is a continual avalanche of harsh noise. Like sticking your head into a jet engine for seven minutes. 100% nihilism. No music involved. (BA)
(Continuum)

HALF HUMAN – "Leave Behind/Glass Traffic"

Bands should never be allowed to describe themselves. The actual sound of this record is a far cry from any PERE UBU-inspired "experimentation" or "unpredictability" and possibly even further from krautrock. In fact, the songs are pretty predictable. They are also pretty cool sounding indie rock tunes with a math rock tilt. The A-side puts you into a bit of a trance with a solid rhythm groove and catchy guitar lines that almost meander but are a little too structured for that word. About halfway through, the guitar sticks into a mesmerizing short line and some yelped vocals that sound like a mix of Chris Leo and Tim Kinsella throwing themselves over chanting back-up vocals. It then gets predictably louder and heavier and messier. The B-side is an instrumental that has a similar feel in that there is a strong rhythm groove with guitars layered over it. It's quiet, it gets loud, it starts and stops, it's not nearly as interesting as the first track. It's not bad, it's actually pretty good but it could use more experimentation and less predictability because despite all the noodling guitar, they still sound like indie rock songs. (PA)
(self-released)

HANK WOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS – "Stay Home!!" LP

Either you're one of the extremely smart and original punks who chants "More Cowbell!" at the mere sight/sound of this band, lambasting the cleaner sound compared to *Go Home!!* orrrr you're still hopelessly under the band's propulsive, sticky spell. Count me among the latter camp, as *Stay Home!!* (along with seeing them live) cemented the band's position as one of finest punk outfits in recent years. Any record boasting tunes as inventive as "Shook and Hungry" or as energetic as "In Bookings" is a total winner. A very punk, very wild and very good LP. (MC)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

HERPES – "Fight On" EP

Did this never get reviewed before? Released back in 2012, *Fight On* fits relatively in line with the recent batch of UKHC that matches bruisingly heavy with punishingly rough: think DIE but with more D-beat. Plenty of feedback, fuzz, and a spattering of blistering leads. Not too surprised that HERPES hail from upstate New York, a particularly cold and upsetting place most of the year. Also not too surprised that this is ex-NO FUCKER. Are people just sleeping on this? It's fucking great, wake up sheeple. (SZ)
(Goblin Shark)

HERPES / HUNTED DOWN – split EP

Yeah, there's more to New York hardcore these days than NYC art school weirdos, as two of upstate's finest aptly prove on this quality split. Led by the indomitable JJ of NO FUCKER, HERPES dish out three tracks of vicious D-beat driven hardcore that owes as much to the unhinged aggression of BLACK FLAG as it does to the structures of DISCHARGE. The truly mean, pained vocals are a definite highlight, as are the later-DISCLOSE style solos, but there's really nothing in the mix that isn't top quality. All the playing is on point, the recording sounds fantastic and the songwriting is several steps above the baseline for this style, stripped-down without ever being overtly derivative or generic. HUNTED DOWN (who I believe are no more?) follow with three tracks of more "modern" hardcore that has a very late '90s/early '00s feel. Definitely has a DEATHREAT vibe but darker, with bellowed vocals that recall DEVOID OF FAITH and a feeling of tightly-wound tension, as if a blast-beat (or a fight in the studio) might break out at any minute. Two angry bands, one fantastic split. Step away from Instagram for a minute

and check out some New York bands that don't come with pre-packaged hype. You won't regret it. (AU)
(Goblin Shark / Recently Deceased)

INDICO – "ΚΑΘΡΕΦΤΗΣ ΟΝΕΙΡΩΝ" CD

It may be all Greek to me, but it's definitely all Greek to INDICO. They're a punk band from Athens, that much I can glean from their website. But not much else, 'cos, well, they sing (and write on their webpage) in their native tongue. Which sounds great to me. They play speedy, driving melodic hardcore/punk. More SLIME than BAD RELIGION. So far as I can decipher, they're a proudly indie band, and seem to have played at least one anti-fascist benefit (or appeared on an Antifa comp) in the not so distant past. With ten tracks clocking in at 40 minutes, they're not skimping on the anthems. And no metal wanking either, which is a plus. Good for them. Good for Greece. Good for you too, I reckon. (RK)
(self-released)

THE INVISIBLE TEARDROPS – "14 Eyes/Tonight I Will Possess Your Soul"

This is keyboard-y garage rock from Florence (Muscle Shoals), Alabama. "14 Eyes" starts with a long instrumental intro (two minutes!) when the vocals finally come in it is startling. I am minding my own business spacing out on this pleasant instrumental then "gotcha." Side B doesn't have a long intro. It's just a straightahead tune with a harmonica solo. It is very sincere. (CK)
(Arkam)

...IS DODELIJK – "Lederhosenzombies" EP

This is what hardcore sounds like when a bunch of energetic, zombie-loving maniacs bash out some blazing, straight-ahead ragers without a bunch of self-conscious retro signifiers. Yes it sounds like if members of SUICIDAL TENDENCIES and UNITED SUPER VILLANS had done an early Havoc release, but that's not the point. The thick guitar and loud, rumbling bass keep everything rolling, as the two singers trade off rapid-fire vocals. Music for basement wrestling and assorted mindless destruction. (DG)
(Kink / Pifia / Windmill)

JIM TABLOWSKI EXPERIENCE – "Home Street Home" EP

As far as pop punk goes, you could do worse—much, much worse—than listening to these little dudes from Dortmund. The songs are snotty, fast, short, and the pretty great lyrics aren't about girls, so they get my vote. This record feels like they would have killed it twenty years ago. I know that sounds like a diss, but this is on repeat at my house this week. (DZ)
(Huge Major Label)

KALASHNIKOV COLLECTIVE – "L'Algebra Morente Del Cielo" LP

Quite a conceptual album we have here. On the front of the booklet it states "Ten screenplays for not existing movies." So each track has printed lyrics in Italian, English translation, and a synopsis. Themes are anti-capitalistic in nature and kind of remind me of the tone of those metaphorical post-apocalyptic sci-fi movies. Musically it's very theatrical and diverse. I suppose it's rooted in punk and hardcore, but I hear elements that bring to mind everything from IRON MAIDEN to QUEEN to LA FRACTION, and even some ska and fantasy metal. It's all very well done, and incredibly imaginative. I've never experienced anything quite like it. I appreciate what KALASHNIKOV COLLECTIVE is doing here very much, and I'm happy I got the chance to sit down and spend some time with this record, but I can't imagine throwing this record on during my recreational record time. (MA)
(Aborted Society / Calimocho / Chaos Rurale / Equal Rights / Forever True / Fra il di e il Fa / Gusto Rana / Gustosissimo / Laterna Pirata / Limb Disarm / L'Oltraggio / Nikotina Rehorz / Nuclear Chaos / Out Cry / Piratia / Radio Onda Rossa / Ratto / SP / Subnormal Factory / Subnormal Factory / Tutti Pazzi Gusto Rana)

KALTE LUST – "Pride is Your Consolation Prize" LP

Pretty, synth-driven, mid-tempo, female-fronted post-punk. Melody wise, I like it but it's sparse—and not minimal synth sparse, but lacking hooks and empty. Their influences say XMAL DEUTSCHLAND but that band exuded a richness and atmosphere that are hard to replicate. I'll give it to them for trying. (AP)
(Destructure)

KÜKEN – LP

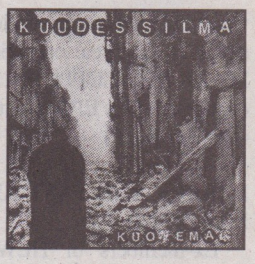
Self-contained and snotty *Damned Damned Damned / Crossing the Red Sea with the Adverts* regurgitation, but this is stripped down, lean and relentless, with a nod and a snort to garage moderne. No bloated impulses or self-indulgence, it all blends into one totalitarian vision, an airless dive down the autobahn with no stops for the weak...From the burly streets of Hamburg, out into the night. Something about this record is sort of personality free, a blank canvas somehow. There's no JAY REATARD stylism, just a nagging empty feeling, with added great hooks and no song longer than a couple minutes. Background music? Maybe it is, but it's a good record and something about the anonymity adds to its appeal. (LG)
(Bachelor)

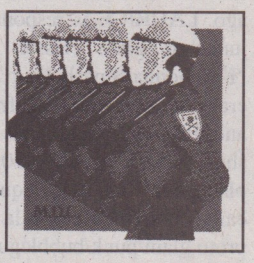
KURRAKA – LP

Austin's KURRAKA play a brand of dark punk equally inspired by PARALISIS PERMANENTE and RUDIMENTARY PENI, deathrock vibes at hardcore tempos. There are flashes of excitement here—I love the marriage of Dru's forceful, reverb-laden, Spanish-language vocals with a speedier pace—but I'm left largely uninspired. Everyone always applies the "raw punk" tag to this group, but maybe I just need it to be a little bit *rawer*? Featuring members of CRIATURAS, if that matters to you. Definitely has the potential to be a grower. (GA)
(Trabuc)

KUUDES SILMÄ – "Kuolemaa" EP

Three tracks of synth and guitar-drenched punk with a lot of emotion and drive. The goth emphasis feels less present here than in their past material. The title track has a driving snare-on-the-downbeat thing going on, and it has a really great chorus. Definitely the stand-out track for me. On the flip you get "Maailmaa Vastaan" and "En Oo Ainoa," which is a DEAD MOON cover ("Not The Only One"). The first B-side track is a bit more upbeat but doesn't capture me like "Kuolemaa" does. There's maybe a little too much going on with the guitar and synth leads battling in the forefront. I'm not familiar with the DEAD MOON song, but they clearly inject their style into it and it sounds awesome! KUUDES SILMÄ's musicianship is world-class, and the rhythms and





vocals are always exceptional and passionate. I saw them last year on their West Coast trip with MAAILMANLOPPU and both bands completely destroyed. This EP is great, as expected. (MA)
(Combat Rock)

LASERS AND FAST AND SHIT – "Third: Munch" CD

Ex-members of HEWHOCORRUPTS and others go in a different but not-entirely-surprising direction with this band, given both their propensity for defying convention and the very obvious mark of Chicago bands on this record, from BIG BLACK to JESUS LIZARD to the BASEBALL FURIES, along with a large dose of NATION OF ULYSSES and mid-period FUGAZI. What you have is a driving noise rock record with the bass and drums carrying most of the weight, with the guitar being just as likely to be showing off some art-damaged prowess, shimmering leads, '90s alt-rock crunch, or holding down a jangly single-note rhythm. The vocals draw heavily from Guy Picciotto's dramatic crooning on one end and David Yow's utterances on the other, with some fuzzy cave howling later in the record, and are well worked into the music. The songs blur together a bit, especially due to virtually no variation in speed until the second to last song, but I am a fan. (DG)
(Forge Again)

LAURICE – "Best of Laurice Vol. 2" LP

Weirdos just getting weirder. I think I reviewed *Vol. 1* when it came out like three years ago. LAURICE is responsible for the über UK junkshop glam classic MIGHTY MOUTH's "I'm Gonna Smash Your Face In" but he was a crazy session musician from the '60s and '70s and this is a bunch of his more out-there studio shizz from the early '70s. Kinda all over the place, but I'm hearing equal parts early BOWIE, early '70s Brit Rock à la SMALL FACES, and proto glam/punk/bubblegum shenanigans. "Dark Side of Your Face" is fuggin' killer moody AM radio gold and side B kinda spreads out into psych-exploito territories. "Diamonds Are Forever," "Spaceship Lover" and "Boston City" are all killers with shoddy, overblown reverb studio effects. This shit's a bit far out from what you might expect from the Almost Ready empire, but if you dig '60s sounds there's a lot of great material here, including a couple new faves. (GB)
(Almost Ready / Mighty Mouth)

LEGENDARY WINGS – "Do You See?" LP

There're pop punk albums, and then there're "summertime" pop punk albums. Those albums that you can't listen to alone in your room. It's just not fun. You need to be outside and accompanied by both friends and cold drinks. Sunshine is a must. Then this record becomes the best thing ever! If you are a grumpy narcissist you will hate this record with every fiber of your being. The first track is about "best friends" and the silly pogo party only intensifies from there. We all got plenty to complain about, but if you wanna forget about all that and listen to a record that will slap a smile on your face and make you bounce off the walls until you twist an ankle, this is your record. Are you the type of punk who honestly *loves* the BEACH BOYS? I am, and that's probably why this record is so intoxicating. (FS)
(Dirtnap)

THE LOOKOUTS – "Spy Rock Road And Other Stories" LP

I think my exact words were "Are you fucking kidding me? The LOOKOUTS record got repressed?" Not that I don't like the LOOKOUTS, because I fucking love the LOOKOUTS. Me and about three hundred other people on the planet, I thought. It does make sense, though, that someone would finally release a bunch of their old shit. I mean, there's like a famous person in the band or something. What we have here, if I understand correctly, is a repress of the *Spy Rock Road* LP, and a "best of" compilation from various other recordings, which is great for me, because there's shit I've never heard, and it rules! For those who don't know, the LOOKOUTS were slightly goofy pop punk with folky overtones and total peace punk lyrics of angst, goof, and despair, born in the heart of Mendocino fucking County! Members went on to start important record labels and giant bands, but somehow it always seemed that this band managed to get overlooked. I'm really stoked to see this come out! (DZ)
(Don Giovanni)

MAGGOT SANDWICH – "American Sucker" LP

Holy shit! A new MAGGOT SANDWICH record, and it lands in *my* box? I wonder if the coords know that I'm probably the only reviewer in the compound who has seen this band about a billion times since 1985, or if it was just fate. For those of you fortunate enough to know of MAGGOT SANDWICH, you might have really intense feelings (as I do) about a compilation of songs written throughout their spotty 30-year history and played on this here recording by a new version of the band. The lineup, with original guitarist and singer, plays pretty spot on versions of classic '80s Pensacola punk (with a few new songs), but do you really want to hear Vik's young guns play new renditions of what you thought was the best punk shit that could ever be played? I don't. I'd like to see it, maybe, at some bar down south, but I have such a gigantic spot in my heart for MAGGOT SANDWICH, I'd rather make you a copy of their fucking fantastic album, *Get Off The Stage*, one of the most overlooked gems from the mid 1980s. (DZ)
(KML)

MAKEOUTS – "Svarta Läder" EP

The title track to this EP is a real banger. Classic, but not stale, punk chord progressions played with heart, energy and total enthusiasm. It's the kind of shit that would make a party erupt if it came on the stereo while a mix tape was playing. Future *Killed By Death* material. The flip side is from a live show and is also energetic but the record would feel more cohesive with some more studio tracks. The first live song "Hjärndöd" is kind of a sleeper and the second one is the *same song from side A!!* Why?? I'm assuming this band has more than two songs. Why would you put the same song on a record twice? Live or not? Side A is where it's at. Side B is useless to me. (GH)
(Forbjudna Ljud)

MARION WALKER / PLASTIC CAVES – split 7"

Somewhat of an odd match for a split, the one musical thing that these two bands share is that they write long songs. Both tracks take up most of their respective sides at 33 RPM so you know you're in for more than just a quick taste. Oh also, the labels are reversed (on all of them ostensibly, as it mentions it on the insert), so as I attempted to keep it alphabetical I was instead dropped onto J. Marion Walker's side. If I could conjecture anything about these rockers, it would be that they like drinking cough syrup. Everything about MARION WALKER's song is lazy and slow. The tempo, the leads, the backing vocals especially, but all of it in general. Musically it's like a modern garage take on DEEP PURPLE but less energetic. If you don't move quickly and like '70s rock with a blues tinge, check these fools out. PLASTIC CAVES, on the other hand, let the listener know with their syncopated and staccato bass line that they are in for some disco-heavy post punk. Is it sort of like a more effect-laden FRANZ FERDINAND? Yes, essentially. It also has a fake-out false ending, which normally I like, but ultimately I just thought these songs were too long. (LP)
(Carbonated Sounds / Intruder Alert! Intruder Alert! / Pleasure Fool)

MARY BELL – "Vultures" EP

Cool dark primitive punk from Paris, it's catchy but melancholy, really reminiscent of the OBSERVERS. That doomed guitar churning over primitive rhythms give this a real Pacific Northwest classique appeal…The singer's voice is as eternally punk as Kat from LEGAL WEAPON, or fuck it, Kathleen Hanna, and is augmented by these *insane* haunted house style backing vocals that are both beautiful and eerie. One song even has a savage early FASTBACKS attack, but they mostly remind me of like…EXCUSE 17 playing 45 GRAVE songs!! There's a fuck you (yet impassioned) juvenile appeal, not a deathrock pose by any stretch, tho they do stalk the darker side of punk. I liked this a lot, but honestly it has a "play once and file" feeling somehow. They are obviously a really cool band and I think this is their first 45, so probably the next thing will be to die for. But I mean really close to everything Danger Records put out is worth grabbing, and this is no exception… (LG)
(Danger)

MDC – "Millions of Dead Cops: Millennium Edition" CD

Fuck. Probably been a couple of decades since I last listened to this early '80s classic. And fuck me, indeed, it holds up well. Texas's STAINS came from the belly of the same beast that spawned the BIG BOYS and the DICKS. Tough, political, uncompromising, with a knack for a good tune. MDC (as they soon became in 1981, as there was an LA band also called the STAINS) added the twist of playing everything twice as fast, and short sharp hardcore was born. Unleashed in early 1982, *Millions Of Dead Cops* was a game-changer for punk/hardcore, in the same way/to similar effect/reverbations as the early efforts by DEAD KENNEDYS, BLACK FLAG, MINOR THREAT and DOA. Here it is again, in all its glory, complete with the 7"s from that era—*Multi Death Corporation*, "Millions Of Dead Children/Chicken Squawk" and the STAINS 7". Plus the complete set from their debut at CBGB's in 1983, and a brace of unreleased tracks. A stunning aural testament to a powerhouse at the top of their game, and in such an era, that's saying something. A defining set of discs for thrash and hardcore, and with some excellent/informative liner notes from X-Con Ron, the guitarist behind it all. (RK)
(Beer City)

MICROBES – "Aids" EP

I have to say I find the sheer stupidity of this record somewhat charming. It just sounds so dumb. The music is simplistic. The lyrics are idiotic. But I admire the tenacity. On the song "Moonrape" does it say "The creature's pussy looks like snake"? That doesn't make any sense, but after listening multiple times that's what it still sounds like to me. (CK)
(Halshugga)

MID RATS – "Vandalize You" CDEP

Newish Lancaster, PA punk band with their first release other than their 2014 demo. MID RATS play a straightforward modern punk with touches of pop punk and street punk. You get four tracks of mid- to fast-paced punk with vocals that really rip. You can not only understand the vocalist, but he changes from shouting to singing and has a lot of different sounds. All four tracks are catchy and sing-along and while sticking to the punk formula they don't exactly sound like anyone. They don't include any of the whiny pop punk stuff and touch on hardcore but keep it all catchy. (MH)
(self-released)

MISCHIEF BREW – "This Is Not For Children" CD

The fourth full-length effort from these Philly anarcho-punk/folk troubadours. More electric/less eclectic (not so much acoustic guitar/violin), and all the better for it. The lyrics are as sharply spot on all the "right" targets as ever, while musically, this is more later BAD RELIGION than early POGUES, "folk" in the stylings of the REPLACEMENTS and NEW MODEL ARMY as opposed to the WOODY GUTHRIE desperate-to-bes, that currently litter punk goes acoustic. There're a couple of gritty ballads, but this is brimming with a spunk and vitality, political rock if you like, that I haven't heard since the glory days of Canada's mighty LOWEST OF THE LOW. Quite superb. (RK)
(Alternative Tentacles)

MINDFLAIR – "Scourge of Mankind" CD

Very cool warped grindcore in the vein of BRUTAL TRUTH. This shit is thick. The weed-infused riffs cascade like a mudslide filled with cinderblocks, rebar and blast beats. They keep it weird by constantly changing up the speed, but it all seems to roll together into one seasick mass of madness. A must listen for grind freaks. Endlessly heavy. (BA)
(Everyday Hate)

THE MONS – "In The Original, It's Red" LP

Chicago veteran punkers play some speedy SST-inspired punk cut with a touch of Midwest heroes like the ZERO BOYS or DIDJITS. There's even some unspectacular Raymond Pettibon cover art to complete the vibe. The singer's kinda annoying. The songs go from really good ("S.A.D.") to moronic ("Me and You and a Dog Named Fuck You") in a needle skip. It's just OK. What do you want from me? (RO)
(self-released)

MOSKWA – "Nigdy!" LP

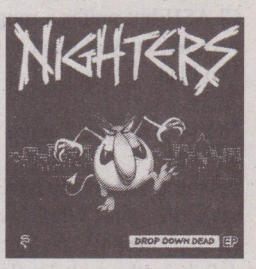
I couldn't be happier holding this long overdue reissue of MOSKWA's awesome 1986 cassette. This recording sees them at their most ferocious. Blazing tempos and high-pitched and insane sounding guitars give MOSKWA a sound of their own among other Polish punk heroes like DEZERTER, TZN XENNA, POST REGIMENT, and REJESTRACJA. The chord progressions and snarled vocal melodies on here indicate a strong talent for songwriting. The recording is so hot and raw and grips me in such a unique way. The default pace is so fast and furious, but then these strong mid-paced songs like "Za Kratami" and "Problem" really stand out as the best. This high-quality reish comes with a nice looking booklet containing translated lyrics and lots of great photos of these guys and their big hair. You don't need every one of those gazillion reissues of every obscure '80s punk release, but you really *do* need this one. (MA)
(Warsaw Pact)

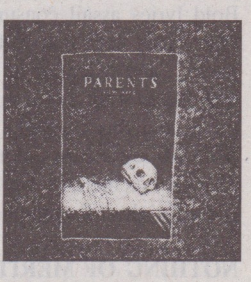
MYSTIC INANE – "Ode To Joy" EP

This is definitely hardcore, but not in an easily synthesized way. It's music for lurching around a basement to—if you spell it HC and are looking for mosh parts, go home. Riffs courtesy of the most inventive guitarist in contemporary punk topped with snotty vocals (with subhuman grunts used to good effect, read: creepy not tuff)—like BOBBY SOXX fronting SACCHARINE TRUST. This is the best of the current wave of mutant punks, and this record marks another addition to a thus-far flawless discography. "Ode to Joy" is the champion here, but they're all winners. Don't call it weird... (GA)
(Negative Jazz)

NATURAL CAUSES – LP

Good shit here! I didn't know what to expect when I dropped the needle down, but was immediately stoked. I'm not sure if these guys would refer to themselves as "garage punk" but they are definitely in that vein, kind of in the same way you wouldn't refer to LOST SOUNDS or other Reatard-related gunk as garage punk, but you know what I mean, right? It sounds like these guys are just guitar, drums and a synthy organ thing and it sounds perfect. Some of the songs fly by at breakneck speeds, with the organ pitch-shifting so hard that it almost sounds like your record is warping before your eyes. It's fuckin' cool. When they slow it down (a rare thing), it creeps along in this grimy, greasy way that adds such a distinctive nasty element. Excellent record. (GH)
(Snot Releases)





NIGHTERS – "Drop Down Dead" EP

Nice surprise here from the same folks that brought us the STIGMATHE and KLAXON reissues. The cover art makes it seem like this is a lost NYHC classic with a Pokémon-ghoul on it, but don't be fooled. *Drop Down Dead* is Italian punk from 1984 heavily in the CLASH vein, but better cause I've never heard these songs in a commercial and didn't spend my adolescence convinced they were as awful as the trash that CRASS said they were. If you like *London Calling*-era CLASH but prefer a rougher production, this is very seriously as good as it might get. (SZ)
(No Plan)

NO – "Treating People Like They Don't Exist" 12"

These Londoners have really out done themselves this time. While I whole-heartedly enjoyed the self-titled 12" on Static Shock, this record is definitely the next level. The recording here is much akin to "the lunatic ravings of a one-off man-mental!" Somehow the guitar has this brittle clean tone clarity while still being completely overdriven. The bass and drums are heavier than an anvil dropped onto a baby grand and still retain precision and punchiness. On top of all that is this completely feral, animalistic, snarling vocal. All of this alone would make a good record, but it is the totally inventive songwriting that makes this a great record. One more reason UK hardcore is back on the map...with a vengeance. Do yourself and your neighbors a favor. (JK)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

NO OMEGA – "Occupants" 12"

Swarms of guitars, channeling screaming anguished emotional hardcore of decades past with masterful proficiency. The vocals only heighten the comparison, as Sweden's NO OMEGA use discordance to compliment disharmony (musical and personal) through five tracks of pained and painfully contracted hardcore. The middle of "Man/Monster" is a really bold move, but the presentation is as successful as the lyrical content. Bold lyrics assail consumption and selfishness with vigor, but these still seem like the hopeful punks...and listening to this release makes me hopeful as well. I like my punk to mean something, and this certainly does. Maybe I benefit from having a rose colored ear to the past, but this one hits hard. (WN)
(Dog Knights / Protagonist)

NOTHING OF MERIT – "American Blast" EP

Tributes to JFA and SONIC YOUTH sandwich charming sax-skronk punk on this debut four-song EP. Sure, it's semi-schizo, but genuine as all hell, which almost makes me forgive the rather restrained sound of the whole affair. Almost! Anyway, extremely outta-time, outta-place and worth a look. (MC)
(Reason For Resistance)

NUN – LP

Finally a US release of this sick pleasure so losers like myself don't have to shell out $30 for the Australian edition on Aarght. If you like to dance around your bedroom to "Nag Nag Nag" and "Hiroshima Mon Amor" at the same time, grab this shit ASAP. Aggro synth nasties pulling apart the degradations of neo-liberal reality inna Ballardian style, simultaneously making you wanna dance like Tomata DuPlenty and run as fast as you can to/from the interzone. Futuristic nostalgia? Danceable destruction! This is perfect synth-punk. For the most part I like the aggressive fast songs more than the plaintive "Driving Blind" ones, tho "In Blood" and "Immersion II" are both endtimes essential. The synths sound *amazing* and Jenny's voice is so tough, triumphant and alive even whilst issuing cold warnings. I have been listening to this record relentlessly; it made my year end top ten last year, and six months into the new year I am still not done with its pleasures. (LG)
(HoZac)

OMAHA – "Touch 'Em All, Joe" CDEP

Not since the glory days of *How To Clean Everything*-era PROPAGANDHI have Canadians done that SoCal melodic hardcore/skate punk so sublimely. This quintet is really fucking good. Very "technical" to go with the speed and melody, though less metallic than STRUNG OUT. Lots of layered vocals and guitars, and as good as anything produced by the likes of PENNYWISE, MILLENCOLIN, NO USE FOR A NAME et al. They remind me a lot of BUENO, but I suspect no one but me remembers those AZ geniuses. Settling for OMAHA may be the next best thing! Six tracks, seventeen minutes of pure bliss. (RK)
(Morning Wood)

THE PACIFICS – "Say You Love Me" EP

You walk into a bar in 2015 Dublin, but then you have to check the date on your smart phone, because there's a smartly turned-out young combo on stage that have transported you back to Hamburg's Star Club in 1962...The PACIFICS hearken back to the Fab Four's time in Germany, mining the same vein of high energy, surf-tinged garage rock that BILLY CHILDISH has helped make famous. Good stuff. (AM)
(Mistkäfer)

PARENTS – "Low Life" EP

This self-produced, self-released EP is one of synthesized sound and identity. PARENTS manage to sound as diverse and confused as they are precise and on point. The screamo vocals that layer over the blastbeat drums, discordant guitars and melodic vibe figure in well together. The cacophony of styles that somehow comes off well worked and energized is a treat to hear as the band seamlessly plods through their dark, powerful and tight songbook. The dense atmosphere of the band is a huge thread on the record as each track is unique yet unified in the PARENTS collection. Not the typical New Zealand or Aussie band you'd expect, definitely a little deeper and darker. (RM)
(self-released)

PEACH KELLI POP – LP

I fell in love with PEACH KELLI POP back when she was with the WHITE WIRES. I've also loved her solo work and this is no exception. This new LP might be a little too sweet for some of you, but I don't mind sugary sweet power pop music, if it's done right. This is done right. The vocals are sweet and pretty. The music is catchy, upbeat and sort of euphoric. It reminds me of some of the early Subway Organization releases, like the FLATMATES and the SHOP ASSISTANTS. Excellent record. (KK)
(Bachelor)

PEASANT – "Go To Hell" LP

From the haunting organ introduction, PEASANT launch into a blistering NWOBHM tinged modern death metal assault that makes me wonder what they are doing lurking in the pages of this fine rag. But after "Do You Believe In War?" has achieved total evisceration, these heathens dig deep and pull out some seriously sick Y2K-Thrash riffage and present it as meaty modern metalcrust. It's a marriage that maybe shouldn't work, especially with the sinister lead vokills, but I've listened to this record countless times since I brought me copy home and I can't get enough. Screaming leads and the subtlety of a battering ram, Houston's PEASANT are one member change away from turning their backs on punk sounds forever (the USBM bent on "Come With Me" might be an indication of future endeavors), but I'm quite happy to be in on the ground floor. (WN)
(self-released)

PEASANT – "Imprisoned at Birth" EP

Houston, TX brings us old school black metal. Meaning it's before all the ambience, noise, and lo-fi crap that black metal turned into. This is still metal, including guitar solos. The drums are simpler and you can hear other influences like NWOBHM. Yes, HELLHAMMER comes to mind. The band also contains former members of NIBIRU, TURBOKRIEG, and WAR MASTER so that can help give you an idea. "Imprisoned at Birth" is full speed with a lot going on. A never ending swirl of guitar and drums that never let up. This track is pure old school black metal with no other influences. "The End" is recorded live and has a little more of a death metal leaning but still black metal. "Defile" starts with a march of sorts then kicks into a gallop right out of NWOBHM and later has the twin lead guitars going. In other words, this is the black metal sound before it was called black metal. Good stuff. (MH)
(Torture Garden)

PERMANENT RUIN – "Are You Ready to Sacrifice?" LP

This LP collects PERM RU's three EPs, along with five new songs (that may come out on their own EP?), presumably compiled to coincide with their recent European tour. Adjectives fail the intensity of this (until-recently) Bay Area hardcore mainstay, and how both live and on record, they breathe life into what can be a stale genre. Rich hits the drums so fucking hard, and when he's not matching the power with speed pound for pound, he's varying the beats so that things come nowhere close to boring. On the more recent songs, they further weed out the bullshit posers by largely defying predictable song structures, just hitting you over the head with whatever riff fits at the moment, sometimes going into a mosh breakdown or ending a song on the spot. And as someone for whom recycled riffs are a dealbreaker, all of them are original and none fail to satisfy. Mariam not only absolutely *brings it* as a vocalist, but her lyrics show a gift for poetically saying quite a bit in relatively few words. I am curious as to why only the lyrics to the new songs are printed (though in general they can be understood), but that's only extra incentive for anyone stumbling upon this LP to track down the original source material. (DG)
(Agipunk)

PINK EYES – CD

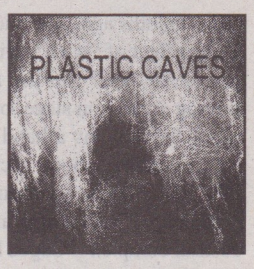
From Chicago, these guys sound very '90s punk wise. The vocals are pretty rough and/or raspy depending on the singer. Sort of DRIVE LIKE JEHU, FUGAZI, and JESUS LIZARD musically. I can't say I loved this but their sound brought back some memories. An abrasive trio. (RL)
(Forge Again)

PISSE – "Mit Schinken durch der Menopause" 12"

Did you just hear *Monokini* by STEREO TOTAL for the first time, and you really like it but you're worried about keeping up punk appearances? Well worry no more, because PISSE have got you covered. These lads (*herrs*?) sound pretty much like that, all the more so because their record was recorded by Brezel Göring and Françoise Cactus lends vocals to one track. This record is super fun, mixing a playfulness that makes the songs really come alive with a willingness to experiment and make odd choices (see the dancehall track with a fantastic female toaster that kicks off the record). A lot of these songs remind me of AUSMUTEANTS if these dudes wrote good punk songs instead of boring and idiotic new wave. What lyrics I took the time to translate showed a real goofiness, but one should expect no lack of disrespect and snot from a band called PISSE (take a fucking guess what it means in English). A good record and the second best sticker I've ever gotten out of a European punk record. I'm usually disappointed by synth punk bands, but these guys have a nice melodic touch and manage to walk a fine punk line between too much poppy melody and not enough. (LP)
(Beau Travail / Phantom)

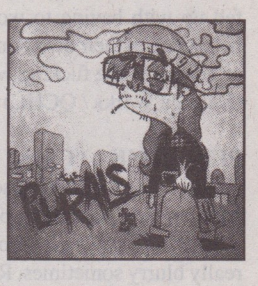
PLASTIC CAVES – "Dispossessed/Cold Remains"

This is really making my day right now! Touching on everything from morose post-punk revival to the dreamy plains sounds of early '90s heroes FOR AGAINST, there's a whole lot to love about Reno's PLASTIC CAVES. This has a slighty new-school feel in the production, especially on the dry front-and-center vocals, but tone-wise there's something about these songs that feels utterly, instantly classic. I love it when a single manages to show off different aspects of a band's sound, and the contrast between the upbeat, highly swayable "Dispossessed" and the bleeding dirge pop of "Cold Remains" only heightens the impact of the individual tracks. Those dual vocals on the chorus of "Cold Remains" have an undeniable goth sizzle, and the whole thing is saturated with the same bleakly romantic fog as dark punk's all-time heavy hitters. (WB)
(Carbonated Sounds)



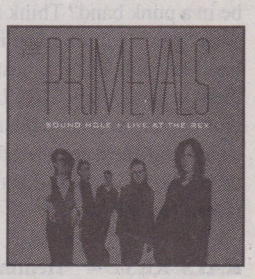
PLASTIC CAVES – "Suicide Floor" EP

One song on a one-sided 7", heavy shoegaze, stonery and overly jammy going into psych rock territory. Not my jam but maybe yours? (AP)
(self-released)



POST DOMINANCE – LP

Do you like GODFLESH? POST DOMINANCE apparently loves GODFLESH. Enough so, that paying tribute, in this case, might be slipping into some serious plagiarism territory. Does the world need another GODFLESH? Pretty sure PITCH SHIFTER answered that question a couple decades back. From the recording I am guessing this is one person directly plugging gear into a computer interface, at times giving it kind of a Burgess/BIG BLACK coldness. The vocals range from low grunting to low moaning which indicates to me that maybe the neighbors had complained in the past. This record also contains the biggest faux pas when emulating GODFLESH: that quasi nü-metal bounce Broadrick and Green cultivated to such ill effect. No can do. (JK)
(self-released)

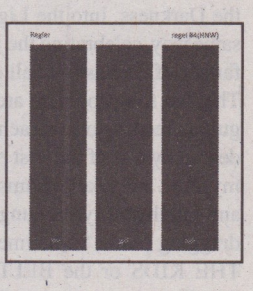


THE PRIMEVALS – "Eternal Hotfire" CD

No chords struck (with me) with the PRIMEVALS' *Eternal Hotfire*. Apparently they hail from Glasgow, first formed in 1983 and wavered in and out of bandhood before reforming in 2007. It sounds like the STOOGES and CAPTAIN BEEFHEART with early INXS, and sure, this is all fine, but I found myself at best bored by song four and absolutely wishing for a swift death by track eleven. Life's too damn short, and I've got a new hot stack of records itching to be played. In all fairness, for the fans of PRIMEVALS who do hold them close to their heart, it's worth mentioning that this particular release features seventeen tracks, a mini compilation of works from 1983-1985 including singles, demos and live material. Next! (CR)
(self-released)

THE PRIMEVALS – "Sound Hole + Live at the Rex" CD

The back of this CD calls the PRIMEVALS "garage rock legends." That is questionable. This is country rock with a rootsy feel. It is slick and well-played. It reminds me of X when Dave Alvin joined. Although the band is from Scotland they sound like they are from the Midwest. This collection is a reissue of their first full-length album "Sound Hole" from 1986 along with a few b-sides and radio recordings plus an extra CD of a live set at the Rex Club in Paris, 1988. (CK)
(Boutique Label)



PURE DISGUST — "Chained" EP

Hardcore record of the year? It's only June but I don't see how anybody could top this in the next six months. I was talking to my friend about the current state of hardcore

a few months ago, and said something ineloquent to the effect of "what's with the 'chains' in hardcore these days? Not just the ones that bands are waving around on stage, but what are you talking about lyrically, as a band of white dudes, when you're talking about society's chains?" PURE DISGUST leave no room for appropriation or ambiguity. These songs are about the prison-industrial complex ("Caged Profit"), racial profiling ("Guilty"), cultural appropriation ("Race War"). It's music for those of us who are exhausted and fed up with having to worry about our families being safe in their own homes and churches. Slam or get out of the fucking way. (EW)
(Katorga Works / QCHC)

PURE JUNK – "Cities" EP

Do I like them because they're a shitty punk band, or do I hate them because they're a shitty punk band? Maybe it's both. Those lines can get really blurry sometimes. Real question for all you readers out there: Should every punk in the world be in a punk band? Think about that…Is your answer "yes"? I think mine is. And in that case, this band is cool. They're just some weirdos, trying their best to play CIRCLE JERKS style punk. Nothing original, and talent isn't gonna blow you away. But they got the attitude and they got the drive. And fuck yeah for that! (FS)
(Dead Celebrity)

RATS REST – "Hedonite/Out of the Darkness, Into the Light"

Full disclosure: I've been listening to mixed and unmixed versions of these songs on headphones for almost a year now and I'm still 100% stoked on them. "Hedonite" is perfect. It breaks into a guitar-driven, raspy-voiced, driving melodic punk song that sends shivers up my spine, not unlike the first time I heard "Springtime" by LEATHERFACE. The lyrics convey a sense of bitter hopefulness…the kind that comes from seeing small triumphs, even when the world wants to beat the fuck out of you every day. Also, it's goddamn catchy as fuck. On the flip, "Out of the Darkness, Into the Light" continues on in the same way, celebrating the joy of having our freaky family of friends with all of their highs and lows. The two songs on here are just solid as fuck: two guitars feeding off of each other, a bass commandeered by one of the best players of all time (Timmy Put…no joke), drums that just hold it down and intelligent lyrics sung with passion. Knuckle dragging punk. Sometimes like NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS or the BELTONES and sometimes not. They have another EP out in Germany that hasn't made it to the mag yet and it's just as good. Just in case some numbskull here trashes it in the future, I just want to take this opportunity to say that they're wrong and one of those songs made me break into tears on a crowded city street. Fuck everything. This is the soundtrack to your dying, fucked up world. "When you get tired of living the chaos, too bad, baby, it's too late." (GH)
(Starcleaner)

REBEL PUNK – "Love & Hate" CD

I've reviewed these guys before. More SOCIAL DISTORTION worship. If RENO DIVORCE is a poor man's SOCIAL D is REBEL PUNK a really poor man's RENO DIVORCE? I gotta say these guys are a little more up-tempo than recent SOCIAL DISTORTION. These guys are good at it. From Sacramento, a band for the classic cars and creepers crowd. (RL)
(Right Right)

RED DEATH – "Permanent Exile" LP

RED DEATH is a now-times crossover-ish unit from Washington D.C. of *Animosity,* RAMPAGE, and DRI-informed whiplash-thrashing, split right down the center, with equal parts hardcore and metal that would tickle the fancy of POISON IDEA, POWER TRIP, or CRUMSUCKERS fans alike. (JU)
(Grave Mistake)

REGLER – "Regel #4 (HNW)" CD

REGLER is a project band that uses traditional rock instruments to perform a different style of music on each of its recordings. This is apparently their stab at "harsh noise wall" (which I didn't know was a genre unto itself—I guess you learn something new every day). Fair play, it's pretty much half an hour of harsh noise done with guitar, bass and drums. Obviously this genre isn't my thing, but I kind of like this, even if I don't have the knowledge base to put it into proper context for aficionados. There's some almost jazzy drum play buried under the surface of noise here, and while the general structure of the noise remains the same throughout, there are enough subtle shifts and variations in composition that it doesn't become tedious. It's possible that noise purists will blow this off as dilettanteish, but with a member of BRAINBOMBS in the band I'm sure that they'll find an audience for this piece. (AU)
(At War With False Noise / Decimation Sociale / Pilgrim Talk / Rapid Moment)

REMA REMA – "Entry/Exit" 12"

An unearthed track from these fabled art-punk mysterios, this is apparently the sole leftover from the sessions that yielded the band's only proper release, 1980's *Wheel in the Roses*. Short-lived and willfully obtuse, REMA REMA were nothing if not unrelenting creative in their approach, and the repetitive, bass-driven krautrock of "Entry" finds the band on a slightly different trip than their usual feedback-laden, electronically-altered post-punk. Forsaking the shambolic MAGIC BAND-inspired eclecticism of *Wheel* for a more streamlined approach that WIRE would go to explore on albums like *154* and *A Bell Is a Cup… Until It is Struck*, pounding drums and dry dual vocals coalesce into a bleak little slice of droning anti-pop. While nowhere near as singular as "Feedback Song" or their eponymous anthem, "Entry" stands out in its own right, and certainly makes an intriguing addition to this band's all-too-thin studio legacy. The instrumental version on the B-side is, of course, complete filler, which unfortunately means that the REMA REMA vault is probably totally tapped. (WB)
(Inflammable Material)

REPAIRS – "Decay/Cycle"

Droningly deadpan and hopelessly cold, consider this as another shot fired in Australia's quest for world synth-punk domination. Mining the subterranean minimalist pulse of SUICIDE and *Jazz Funk*-era THROBBING GRISTLE in search of non-organic life, REPAIRS slowly lurches and sputters its way into the host's brain with a machinic patience, relying on repetition to induce a trance-like state in which the listener's individual affect is slowly and subtly erased. It's high praise to say this could easily pass for something recorded in '79 or '82 or whatever, but this wisely bypasses both ironic retro-party rehash and "golden days" hero worship, allowing the music to stand on its own terms within and outside of time. A superior audio product, to be sure. (WB)
(HoZac)

RODNEY SHADES BAND – "In the Kingdom/Rock'n'roll Shortchange"

Grave new beat! Sounds more like KING DIAMOND or IRON MAIDEN to me. Two-song EP paying homage to that DISCHARGE record most of us pretend doesn't exist. Riff heavy licks encased in spandex and big hair. Sitting this one out and sticking to stenchcore. (AP)
(Antisociety)

SAVAGEHEADS – "Wrong Side of the Law" EP

This is the European pressing of the EP that came out last summer. Nothing different, but for those of you who don't know here we go… SAVEAGEHEADS come from where some of the best punk and hardcore in the world comes from, Boston. So it should come as no surprise that this thing fucking rules. It sounds like the PARTISANS decided to start a faster more hardcore inspired band. Four songs done in seven minutes and guaranteed to make you pogo till your boots fall off. (KC)
(Doomtown / Trabuc)

SCHWACH – "Startklar" EP

Positive, political hardcore with the crew, the mosh and backing gang vocals you want, and the explanations that you need. I'm not talking about preaching, I'm talking about information (case in point: "Deutschland Du Opfer" which, by the way, has a sick breakdown) and I'm talking intent. Impossible to say this without coming off cornball, but I like hardcore that makes me want to punch a wall *and* read a book. Germany's SCHWACH does that and more, and you can shove your dismissive *"blah blah generic hardcore"* nonsense right back in your facehole. Nailed it, kids…and keep 'em coming. (WN)
(Racoone / Refuse)

SCUMRAID – "Rip Up" EP

Low-end madness from Seoul's SCUMRAID. I'd heard good things but kept forgetting to give their demo a listen, despite the heaps of praise thrown at it. So with *Rip Up* as my first exposure, this seems like something I would lose my head over live. Like, my nose and glasses would be shattered in pieces. A certain (WN) confirmed that they absolutely destroy in person. Crasher insanity here: super heavy bass, pounding drums, buzzing guitar—tempo changes reminiscent of LASTLY with bass thunder à la ZYANOSE. My only concern is that it's one-sided, but I realize that actually just saves me the trouble of flipping the damn thing. (SZ)
(Iron Lung)

SEVERE – "Distorted Views" 12"

This isn't my usual cup of tea, but I have to say these guys aren't half bad. Equal parts mid-period NYHC mosh and California crossover à la ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT or CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER. The vocalist has some cool million-mile-an-hour vocal patterns. The record kind of loses steam over its back half, but they redeem it at the very last second with the massive mosh break that closes "Shallow." It's easy to imagine these guys as the local opener that consistently blows the unsuspecting touring bands off the stage. (AU)
(Toxic Mosh)

SHEER MAG – "Fan The Flames" EP

One of those records that sounds OK either at 45 or 33 RPM though neither sounds quite right. Since a speed isn't noted on the label, it's listener's choice. I prefer the 45 option where the singer sounds like a lo-fi JACKSON 5-era MICHAEL JACKSON. The music is a little bit groovier at that speed too. There is a '70s pub rock style to it. At 33 the music sounds slow and plodding. Plus the vocals are way too slow and the songs go on much too long. (CK)
(Katorga Works / Wilsuns)

THE SHINING – "The Infinite Reign of Madness" LP

Motherfuck it, a doodie in a bucket. Crossover thrash? Humph. Don't make me...Okay, this is heavy hardcore thrash. At least it is heavy and not too wankering. The SHINING has been on the metal scene for fourteen years already! The drums are raging. The changes are interesting. The breakdowns are retro and headbang-worthy. Imagine HOLY MOUNTAIN started to write songs more like SLAYER. The guitar soloing is very proficient. Overall everything is polished nicely with a gritty crust metal edge to it. So, not too polished. One song on here, "Roaches," might have the longest scream in extreme music history. Yes, longer than that one on DISRUPT's *Unrest*. And at just that moment, the actual songwriting really went into realms of SKITSYSTEM's *Grå Värld / Svarta Tankar*. The cover art is an incredible illustration of pigs around a cauldron, a sermon of sorts, where a cloaked Jack Skellington-like figure holds an owl and conjures up something or other. It is not overly serious, but it is superbly executed. Such is their LP. (JR)
(Inverted Inhumation / Dirty Guys Rock / Darcytrash / Riding Ancient Waves / Dead Heroes)

SHIT HITS THE FAN – "Unstuck In Time" CDEP

The label that released this CD boasts "Home of '90s Punk Rock Since 2013." Just take a moment to sit with that statement. I lived through the '90s and most of the melodic punk that was being foisted upon an unsuspecting punk scene was just god-awful. Southern California, Fat Wreck and Epitaph really drove a spike into the community that will never go away. SHIT HITS THE FAN is a product of that and they are a current band. If you need to relive the '90s, really love playing Tony Hawk Pro Skater with the music on or *actually just like* that style of pop punk, these guys are unabashedly dishing it out for you. For fans of PENNYWISE, the OFFSPRING and LAGWAGON. (GH)
(Morning Wood)

SHOVELS — LP

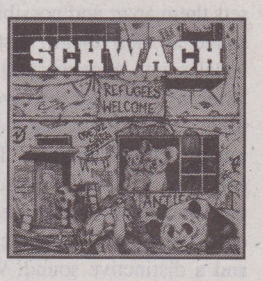
I hope I can be as persuasive in encouraging you to check out this LP as everyone who brought me out to see this band play live in Oakland and San Francisco last month, sight unseen and sound unheard. Listen to your friends, they're usually right! This band is great! This record is great! Don't listen to everything your friends say though; while this band's name and nationality (Australian in origin, with members split between Melbourne and the Bay Area) made at least one person jump to a FEEDTIME comparison, they definitely craft their own rhythmic and sonic space. That comparison might be apt in describing *how* they play (with trancelike intensity to the brink of exhaustion) but not really in describing *what* they play (slower bass heavy post-punk bordering on noise rock). It's all propelled by a drummer/percussionist who's created his own language and rhythmic structure in the absence of any formal training. The record does a pretty good job of capturing it all, but I hope for your sake that they get back on the road some time. California readers will have to settle for my plug of Mike Beach's solo project, MICHAEL BEACH, which is less punk but well worth the liberation of your undeserving mind. (EW)
(Homeless)

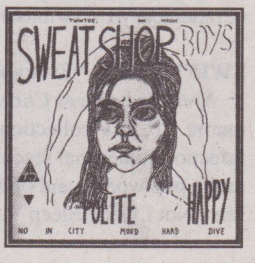
SNAGGLETOOTH – "I Walk the Plank" EP

Fuckin' hell, here's an easy one to review. Do you love the classic Lemmy/Philthy Animal Taylor/Fast Eddie Clarke MOTÖRHEAD material? You do? Then you'll love this fuckin' EP. These Singaporean maniacs have the sound so dialed in (save the inimitable vocals of one Ian Fraser Kilmister) that these three songs (plus intro) could mostly pass as outtakes from the *Overkill* sessions, though "Burning Bridges" does step a little further into punk than their Godhead, and to SNAGGLETOOTH's credit the lyrics are quite a bit more challenging to authority than the average MOTÖRHEAD tune. Some cats value originality in their music, and I guess I do too sometimes, but man... these fucking kids wrote some fucking awesome MOTÖRHEAD songs, and that's more than enough to make this an EP worth recommending. (AU)
(4490)

SNOOTY GARBAGEMEN – LP

It's one of those records that is promising to look at, you scan song titles and do a slight head nod...okay, just maybe. But after sitting through song after song of this samey-same hard rock attack the eyes glaze and the needle starts jumping to the next tune with a life of its own. The vocals are raspy as shit, that can lead to something with some riffs, but the lack of studied ambition that must keep things loose for this band live (I have zero doubt) keeps them from breaking through in the songs dept. There are two damn good efforts on the flip side, but the weaker songs sound like echoes of those winners and so drains their effect. Their prior band pedigree is more impressive than present achievement, and it leads





one to speculate that they could all stumble into some kind of accidental greatness at some point. Not here. (RW)
(12XU)

THE SPLITS – "II" LP

Helsinki band the SPLITS offer up their second LP, but it's not sophomoric in the least. They have a similar slower-paced TERRIBLE FEELINGS punk approach with a weirdo psych USELESS EATERS and NOTS garage vibe. What sets them apart and possibly their most signature sound is their tough, distorted rock'n'roll girl vocals, with enough snarl and growl that bites. "Melody" is by far my favorite track on *II*: faster paced, screamy vocals, weird psych guitar hook melody, it fucking rips. "Two Faces," "I Know" and "End Is Near" are also stellar, with a darker post-punk feel. The ebb and flow of *II* is thought-out, songs are well-written with tight melodies and a distinctive sound. Worth mentioning that they named their band after the SPITS and the SLITS, hard shit to live up to. The SPLITS are doing fine. (CR)
(Dirtnap)

STRAIGHTLINE – "Final Redemption" CD

Super watered down, soulless metal punk. This sterile attempt to bridge a gap that's been done correctly a million times before sounds exactly like a hundred thousand other Fat hopefuls I heard in the '90s. (DZ)
(Morning Wood)

THE SUEVES – "Liquid Hounds/Bricks 'n' Bones"

A debut that hits the sweet spot between today's fuzzy and vaguely psych brand o' garage and yesteryear's brand of Midwestern no-bullshit punk. SUEVES are itchy and provoke contortions, but the groove is undeniable and ultimately what I'm left wanting to continue hearing well after the single has stopped spinning. There's probably a hi-fi LP ready to smack us in 3-2-1... (MC)
(HoZac)

SWEATSHOP BOYS – "Always Polite, Never Happy" EP

Fuck yeah! As soon as the needle hits, I'm hooked! These stoners from Israel seem to have taken a few notes from FROZEN TEENS and NIGHTMARE BOYZZZ, and that ain't a bad thing at all. Beautiful, cool cover art, totally desperate lyrics, and it's super duper dancey. I wanna wanna wanna hear some more! Fucking great! (DZ)
(Crapoulet / SP / Twintoe)

SWIFTUMZ – "Everybody Loves Chris" LP

Everybody Loves Chris, SWIFTUMZ's sophomore LP, is a collection of simple, extremely infectious tunes that reach for fairly lofty heights in the pop world...and often surpass them. Tunes like "Not Losing Sleep" and the perfectly punky "Willy" will please any pop-leaning reader out there, but it's the druggy, fuzzed excursions like "Come My Way" that surprise and make the album a success front-to-back. My most-spun record of 2015 thus far and as perfect a DIY pop record imaginable in this day and age. (MC)
(Melters)

TENEMENT – "Predatory Headlights" LP

Sometimes a *clean* recording works for a band, and sometimes it works against them. In the case of TENEMENT it does both. Typically bands that rely on "energy" need a dirtier more distorted sound. It makes it easier to get lost in the chaos and let go. On the flipside, there're bands whose power comes from a finely crafted song. A cleaner (more produced) recording allows us to soak in the melodies and grooves of the song. TENEMENT has, in the past, been a band of spectacular songwriters and a cleaner sound really benefited them. And here with *Predatory Headlights* we have their cleanest, most produced effort yet. But they might have taken it one step too far. Although the songs are cool, and really good, there isn't a trace of grit left in them. If you were to listen to each song individually it's hard to objectively call any of them "punk". With this album, you might have to classify them as a "rock" band (and a damn fine one at that). Their slower numbers are comparable to a PAVEMENT style of indie rock, while their harder, more distorted songs sound kinda like FOO FIGHTERS. But regardless of style this is an epic double LP that is 100% worth listening to from beginning to end. Listening to just one track individually does this whole album a disservice. This record was created as an album, not just a collection of songs. And played from beginning to end, you are able to see how brilliantly crafted the songs and album truly are. These guys are amazing songwriters and if you are a fan of their past efforts, you will love this huge album. Unless you're looking for a mosh pit, in which case just move on to the next record review. (FS)
(Don Giovanni)

THEYEATTHEIROWNGOD – "Occlude/ Swallow/Conflagrant / Open Gaits"

Epic and emotive, this is worth checking out for those of you appreciate the more tender, reflective side of neocrust and screamo. THEYEATTHEIROWNGOD touch on a whole range of styles—everything from A Coruña-influenced modern crust, depressive doom, and sad-face corpse paint black metal to straight-up alt rock—but somehow manage to fashion these into a coherent, haunting amalgam of cascading hardcore and pastoral haze. There are fits and starts—not all of the fast stuff hits quite as hard as it could, and the post-rock build-up on "Open Gaits" felt a bit inspirational for my taste—but all in all this a genuinely intriguing record, bolstered by a thoughtful, poetically political anarchist lyrical focus. (WB)
(All We Know / Anti Corp / Get Better! / IFB)

THUNDER DRIVER – "T.M.F.D." CD

That's THUNDER MOTHER FUCKING DRIVER to you. Fucking stupid. Ignore that and this is mostly pretty motherfucking good and pretty motherfucking long. Not punk at all. This is T-Top Trans Am parking lot donuts *rock*. The singer has a voice that reminds me of B.T.O. with a Southern twang or Dave Meniketti of Y&T. Actually this is really Y&T. The bad songs are poor attempts at classic Southern rock or KISS and we all know that KISS is *weeeaak*. I'm listening to this on a boom box I found on the street that skips real bad. Yeah. Fucking Y&T. (RO)
(self-released)

TOMBOY – "Sweetie" LP

Like a cat that toys with a mouse, TOMBOY'S *Sweetie* bears its teeth only for amusement and not for the kill, summed up perfectly with lyrics "Don't you think I'm fun / Don't you think I'm nice / Well, don't fucking touch me / Let me give you some advice." Side A's "Tomboy Anthem" and "Emma" spread syrupy sweet vocals over fuzzed melodic guitar reverb that swirls and circles beneath. "Sweetie" switches things up with a SHOPPING like mid-tempo throb and a sick overlay of intricate surf guitar. Flip to side B, "Bethany" and "Can't Stand You" are thick on sass with a true '90s vibe, a mix of BRATMOBILE and SLEATER-KINNEY, and "In the Fucking Band" has a straight up POTTY MOUTH kick! All good things come to an end with "Blue" a SOFTIES-at-heart tune with layered harmonized vocals over sweet melodic guitar. Really hoping these Boston babes come out West on tour soon! (CR)
(Ride the Snake)

TOXIC REASONS – "Essential Independence" CD/DVD

A reissue done right, *Essential Independence* is packed with action, and light on filler. Basically, this is all of the TOXIC REASONS reissues that Beer City has cranked out over the last couple of years on one CD, but that's not a complaint, because every single thing here is a dead classic. *War Hero* and *Ghost Town* EPs, 1982's mandatory *Independence* LP and an absolutely screaming live set from 1981 that was put to wax last year, with an excellent collection of missives, notes and memories, and a DVD of a reunion show in 1999 (they ripped). TOXIC REASONS were an indescribable machine at their height—Pittman's voice, full of gravel and rage, doing battle with a guitar that is just pure muscle on track after track—and this is undoubtedly the band at their height. (WN)
(Beer City)

TRAGIEDIA – "Punk 'Til Destruction: Polska 1988-1989" LP

There's a lot to be excited about with regards to punk in the 2010s, the seemingly endless flood of high-quality reissues being very high on that list. TRAGIEDA's demos have been circulating among dedicated tape traders for decades, but

until now these songs are probably best known via the kind of lackluster POST REGIMENT tribute LP from '99. Now, finally, we have a quality release of the original material and it's fucking blazing. Unlike a lot of Polish punk bands which embraced genre-hopping experimentation, this is just straight-up hardcore punk, driven by hard-hitting 1-2 drums, buzzsaw guitars, and pissed-off vocals. The gritty recording quality is preserved in the best possible way, adding a layer of grime to the band's violent, ugly hardcore attack. It's hard to articulate just how vital and fucking pissed-off this music is. Even divorced from the context in which it was made this is some of the angriest punk I've ever heard, in both presentation and lyrics. You can't listen to songs like "Krowy" or "Brak Slow" or "Cisza" and feel good about yourself or the state of the world around you—then you look at the lyrics and you just want to die. I wish that this had gotten the super-swank reissue treatment, with a fat booklet of photos and band history and such, but here you get the music and the words and that's all you really need. If you buy one record based on *MRR* reviews this month, make it this one. Absolutely essential and long, long overdue. (AU)
(Todo Destruido)

UNIFORM – "Perfect World" LP

This New York duo played a very visceral set in Montreal last year. So savage, in fact, that one might mistakenly categorize UNIFORM as a noise band. To me, *Perfect World* is much more a synth punk record than anything else. While there are elements of both early industrial and noise, this record is actually full of catchy guitar riffs and vocal dynamics that subvert both of those genres. Try to imagine singles-era S>P>K colliding with METAL URBAIN. Most of the songs maintain a sharp, high-energy attack until nearing the end of the record where things slow down a bit. This results in the album's, dare I say, most beautiful moment, "Lost Causes," with its great repetitive guitar line and keyboards by a former member of COIL. My only complaint is that the label should forget about sending a press release and send a reviewer copy instead. (JK)
(12XU)

VANITY – "Yer Fucking Boring/There's The Door"

I didn't think I could like an Oi! band more recent than the TEMPLARS, but I was definitely proven wrong with this. VANITY effortlessly combines elements of rock'n'roll, à la ROSE TATTOO (this is especially prevalent on the A-side slammer "Yer Fucking Boring"), glam, and '77 punk. During some of their spacier moments, you could see them touring with GIUDA, but attracting a tougher crowd. Their record *Vain In Life* was probably one of my top five records of last year and this EP is a great primer (it was released just in time for New York's Alright) for what they've got coming next. I'm really stoked on this band. For fans of: MLS soccer (not football), bread pudding, and Italian shoes. (MW)
(Katorga Works)

VEXX – "Give And Take" EP

When I first heard this band, they immediately reminded me of X; not because the singer sometimes sounds like Exene (she does, but only a little), but because the snaking guitar lines made me think of Billy Zoom's rockabilly-tinged guitar work. Somehow this band manages to feel modern and classic at the same time. Four songs of intelligent, angst-ridden punk that doesn't sound quite like anything else—a difficult feat to pull off. Great stuff. (AM)
(Katorga Works)

VICIOUS X REALITY – "Eyes To The Sun" EP

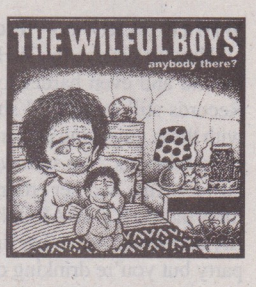
Takin' it back to the early '90s East Coast Hardcore style, VICIOUS X REALITY are bring classic beatdown hardcore coming at you with loose bass, a month-punching solid kick drum, and all the "Ohhhs and interesting vocals. This is in English with a strong Czech accent. Its awkward crew stomps, gang anthems, and youth-enraged regurgitated themes make me happy. This has all the right varsity hardcore cues about social difficulties like breaking the ice, setting fire to yourself, having a clue, trying harder, vegetarianism, and putting a bag on your head. For example, the first time I heard ORDER from Japan I was immediately draw to their English dynamics. So I love this. It grooves and is pretty easy on the ears, I only wish it was a little heavier, but in a way, the resonation of what it's doing comes across clear with sincere appreciation for scrambling onto the stage just to dive off of it. Beautiful gloss finish photograph sleeve printing—yeesh, they went all out on this. All in all, this is a super solid EP for fans of YUPPICIDE, LIFE'S BLOOD, and YOUTH OF TODAY. And one more thing—why don't you care? Open your eyes. This EP makes me happy. (JR)
(Black Wednesday / Refuse)

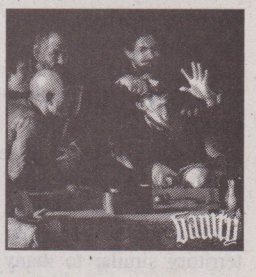
WARHEAD – LP

Legends. Absolute legends. After twenty-plus years as a band and having released some of the very best hardcore EPs of all time, WARHEAD have finally graced the world with their first full-length LP and of course it's a fucking scorcher. One of WARHEAD's great qualities over the years has been their consistency, to the degree that many of these songs wouldn't sound out of place on their 1993 MCD release. Not that I'm implying that they're lazy or refusing to grow, just that WARHEAD found their voice early and have always nurtured that particular sound to incredible effect. Like their previous releases, this is very much a vocal and guitar album, with Jun's unmistakable vocals taking center stage, supported by Ebuchi's fiery riffing and blazing solos. There are very few bands that could create and sustain the tension of a song like "Light To Tomorrow," with its nearly unbearable driving speed and inhuman shrieking vocal. Along with the original material for the album are some re-recorded classics, including the album-closing "Don't Give'n to Any Pressure" from their split with ORDER, and "Acceleration" (best song!) and "This World of Confusion" from the last single, all of which are fucking great songs and sound amazing on the LP. True fans (unlike myself, shamefully) already have the CD that came out late last year on Blood Sucker Records, but vinyl junkies and those behind the curve need to embrace this opportunity to pick up a modern classic from one of the best Japanese hardcore bands of all time. (AU)
(540)

WARM SODA – "Symbolic Dream" LP

Bobby Martinez is a big fan of the WARM SODA. It's true, he told me so. And I like Bobby, I really do, but his taste in music is sometimes questionable. While that may be true, he's right on about this one. Not everybody is going to like this, but if you're a fan of mid-tempo power pop that is extremely catchy, you're in for a treat. These guys have it all. They're from Oakland, the power pop center of the universe. Their lead man, Matt, sports a mustache. Most importantly, they deliver some excellent power pop with vocals that have a whispery quality. How can you not like a band that include a sticker on their indie label record which declares "Including the hits..."? This one is going to live on my turntable for a time. (KK)
(Castle Face)





WHITE BARONS – "Electric Revenge" LP

Hard to believe the WHITE BARONS are still around and even harder to fathom that Gearhead Records still exists?!? I shared a rehearsal studio with these guys long ago and found them to be fine human beings. Not sure who remains in the band besides Amy and her crooning vocals. This record finds the WHITE BARONS in a moment of maturity and fewer cheap bar drugs. It's still a raunchy party but you're drinking out of glasses instead of cracked jars now. You even get the obligatory appearance by the new Jello Biafra,...Blag Dahlia. There ya go. (RO)
(Gearhead)

THE WILFUL BOYS – "Anybody There?/Flat Out"

Aussie ex-pats drag their knuckles through the gutter with a couple NYC compatriots, becoming pretty goddamn wilful in the process. First I've heard from this particular lot, but they're mining territory similar to many on the Homeless and Aarght! rosters: modern grill-fat guitar scree coupled with solid low-end tough-stuff, dealing with the lyrical staples of frustration and defeat. Since I basically spend every waking moment wishing I was dead, I endorse this band and this offering in particular. (MC)
(Ever/Never)

WYMYNS PRYSYN – "Head In A Vise" LP

Dischord worship from Atlanta. The guitars sound really full and have that noisy dissonant Dischord ring à la RITES OF SPRING, but it gets a bit darker at times and almost merges onto Albini-esque territory. The drums are super catchy with really interesting fills, not your run of the mill. It's a pretty long record, with twelve songs, most of them around the three-minute mark and because of that I feel like it kind of blends together at times. No one song really sticks out to me as the hit single, but I think that it all comes together to make a really great entire record experience. It also seems to change a bit with every listen. This is definitely a complex record that is worth your time and appreciation. (KC)
(Drugged Conscience)

ZAGA ZAGA – "2 Songs Demo + 4 Songs" EP

Weird, spastic/tech-y modern hardcore from Tel Aviv. There's a definite late '90s/early '00s metalcore influence that's somewhere around CONVERGE, early DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN. Although it's also not exclusive to that sound, as they do a CHARLES BRONSON cover (which I don't know the original). And really, I first thought this record was gonna be a bit more of the powerviolence side of things based on the INFEST/MAN IS THE BASTARD. looking block-text they used all over. After the CHARLES BRONSON and powerviolence tribute they go back to the zig-zaggy/cuckoo-bird tempos. Altogether, I dunno, not bad? Though, this is probably much better live and hey, *at least* they don't remind me of EIGHTEEN VISIONS or POISON THE WELL. (JD)
(Kuskus / Lifeisafunnything)

V/A – "Death Trap From Hell" CD

BATTLESCARD veer closer and closer to traditional Japanese hardcore with these tracks, perhaps my favorites from them (get the demos, kids!!). Toronto's ABSOLUT are as furious as ever, and their brand of bombastic crust is even more fervent than on prior releases...unhinged and off the rails in every fukkn way, with ripping leads that drop in from nowhere. Malaysia's OSMANTIKOS are crushing low end hardcore with shades of melodic crust, but they lean on their sheer power more than the melody. A comp featuring three bands I already like, and all three surpass expectations—long live international hardcore. (WN)
(Black Konflik / Bullwhip / Exit Music / War Cloud)

V/A – "The Dicks From Texas and Friends" CD

Covering the DICKS is a dicey proposition. Can your band bring what they brought? Unlikely. But here's 25 or so Texas bands who gave it a go, covering (with just a couple exceptions) the Texas era of the band. Nearly every song from *Dicks Hate the Police, Live At Raul's* and *Kill From the Heart* appears, a few more than once. Most of this was recorded around the fall of 2014, though there are a handful of older tracks. Judging from the band photos, all the participants are of legal drinking age, mostly by a while. The bands who kept it closest to the punk/hardcore style mostly fare the worst, too polished and too tame. The BULEMICS deliver, particularly on the instrumental end of "Dead In a Motel Room," and PUNKAROOS, with Buxf on bass, do all right. Others stumble by having pleasant singing in lieu of degeneracy and desperation. But for sure the DICKS had great songs, and they can be adapted for a milder instrumental sound. The opening, acoustic version of "Dicks Hate the Police," BLACK IRISH TEXAS's "Lifetime Problems," CHURCHWOOD's "Suicide Note," and JESUS CHRIST SUPERFLY doing "Anti-Klan Pt 2" are well-rendered in this vein. BLACK EYED VERMILLION are for people into downers (pills); DOUG HILSINGER and POOR DUMB BASTARDS also bring a keyboard/nebbed-out aesthetic appropriate for celebrating and castigating creepy, closeted cruisers. Buxf plays on three songs, the late Glen on one, and Gary contributes vocals to an electronica version of "Guilbeau 2." Of course, Gary remains an amazing vocalist and performer, but this track didn't resonate for me. Some people might get stoked seeing JESUS LIZARD and MIKE WATT have tracks here, but you needn't. The queer/freak vibe is ain't what it could be, considering the source material, while the Austin bar band quotient is high. I felt the main point of this CD is to spread the DICKS music to a newer or wider generation of Austin show-goers. Any 70-plus minute covers comp is gonna be uneven, but there are some songs here which would be fine on mixtapes. (JM)
(Grackle Butter)

V/A – "Guide to Permanent Oblivion, Vol. 3" LP

Most of us have already made up our minds about Revo, NV. Some of us love it some of us hate it. You can argue that all day long. But one thing we can all agree on is: Reno is weird. Real weird. Weird people come from there, weird things happen when you go there, and weird music comes from there. Don't believe me? Here's a fourteen band compilation of Reno bands that will prove it to you. This record is all over the map. The first few tracks start off kinda cold and goth. But then it goes all over the place: pop punk, garage, grunge, indie rock, stoner rock, the list goes on. Have you not made up your mind about Reno? Or just feel like having your brain scrambled? Then get this record. Only 300 copies exist. (FS)
(Intruder Alert! Intruder Alert!)

V/A – "Living in a Shadow" CD

This excellent comp collects unreleased or otherwise exclusive songs by bands from Australia and New Zealand, and is a great example of a collection that has a range of well-curated creative sounds, yet also has definite cohesion and vision, as whomever put this together also talks of being influenced by classic punk comps from *Mixed Nuts Don't Crack* to *We Got Power* in the liner notes. There is very little filler and far too many standouts to name specifics, but sonically you get everything from dark garage punk to lethargic, misanthropic dirging to sweet pop, as well as electronic and noise stuff that may not be reviewable on it's own, but is certainly also good. USELESS CHILDREN are the only band I'd heard of prior to getting this, and their end-of-the-world invoking song is probably my favorite, but other names that appear on here include BI-HOUR, BRIDAL GNOME, HEX ON THE BEACH, the NEW SEASON, and so forth. If the rest of this label's output is as good as this comp, I'd imagine one could get lost for hours in their Bandcamp page, which I may do myself. (DG)
(Vacant Valley)

V/A – "The New Wave of The Grave New Wave Beat Vol.1" CD

A compilation of oddball D-beat revivalists put together by Scotland's ever-brilliant "Cal-era DISCHARGE" worshippers THISCLOSE, this is full up with clever little rippers. Some serious territory covered here, considering the specificity: RODNEY SHADES BAND adds an over-the-top glam edge to the THISCLOSE formula of tuff, falsetto-lead rockers, and SVARTSKIT stand out with some classically harsh and raw Scandi-style fury, but nothing on earth will prepare you for the DIScobeat insanity that is DATCHARGE. Nice to see some cutting, to-the-point lyrical criticism aimed at punishers within the ultraleft/anarchist scene, from FAIRYTALE's catchy reminder that "at the anarchist meeting / the loudest voice is male and white" to ISM's anti-vanguardist "Activism (Is A Fuckin' Graveyard)." With genre names like "Hard-opera" and "D-tech" dropped in the liner notes, it's hard to tell if this is whole thing is a massive inside joke, but that's hardly a concern when the songs are killer more often than not. Ends with a nice, ten-minute dark ambient outro...uh, wot? (WB)
(Our Future)

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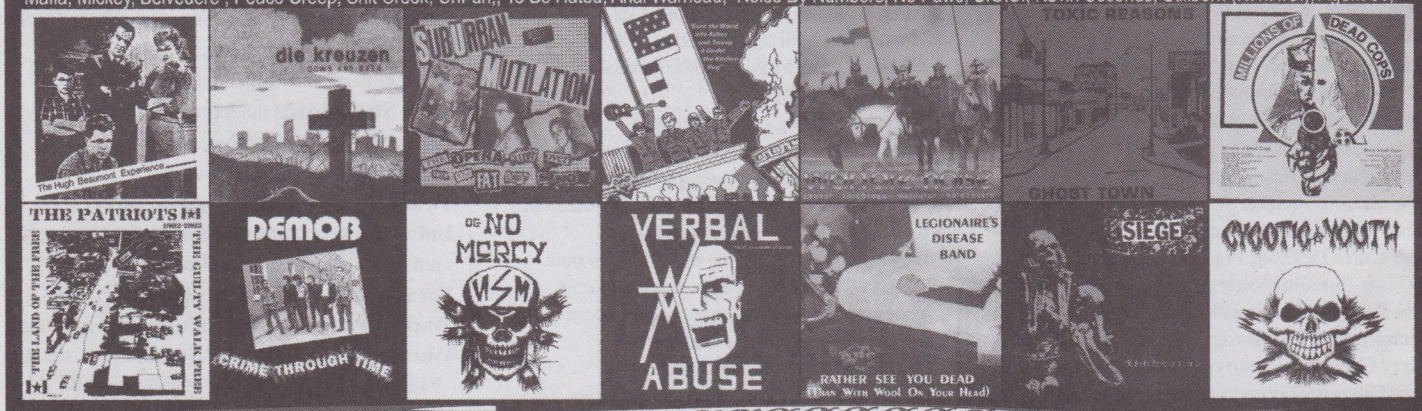

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50 MILLION – *TSRI* – This tape is the long-lost double LP recorded by 50 MILLION in the Mission District of San Francisco way back in 1999. It has sat dusty and unloved in milk crates ever since. As the story goes, labels offered to put it out if the band would cut out the noisier parts and just leave the pop songs, but the band wisely refused. So, the thing just sat there until the band decided to finally release it on cassette sixteen years later. Putting this on is like opening up a time capsule from a completely different era (because it is). Describing the music of 50 MILLION is akin to predicting the movements of a wild animal. One moment, they're pulling you in with sweetness only to rip you apart moments later. They go from blazing pop songs to tender ballads to harsh noise to live acoustic numbers to synth weirdness to metal/hardcore. Total mindfuck at all times. It's the sound of drugs…all of them. As a lifetime fan of this band, I'm beside myself that this labor of love exists in a physical form, even if it's not in the form that the band originally envisioned. They listed their contact info as the original info from 1999. If you were to write to those locations now, you would reach a chiropractor's office and a basement full of treadmills. Also, one of those locations is where the RESIDENTS lived in the early '70s. Anyway, this is a missing piece of a puzzle…a key you didn't know you had been missing. Long live 50 MILLION! (Greg) (34-song cassette, lyrics not included, starcleaner.com)

ALEXANDER THE TERRIBLE – I'm definitely gonna cringe a little when a band says they have the "best ukulele in punk." This desert punk band is not the folk punk band I feared, but they're not incredibly far off. Consisting of just uke and drums, they pull off a really full sound…and I cannot lie, the ukulele is pretty rippin' and most definitely the best uke in punk. Aggressive, politically charged punk with heavy, heavy elements of slam poetry. The singer has a twang that floats between screaming country punk and Gordon Gano (VIOLENT FEMMES). (Greg) (8-song CD-R, lyrics not included, alexandertheterrible.bandcamp.com)

ASID BATERI – I heard this tape was real good. It is. Howling D-beat with a piercing clean guitar taking center stage and vocals kinda yelling in the corner—they seem to have reverbed the whole damn mix instead of just the vocals, and resulting in an oddly discomforting anxiety that works well. High point of the tape is the guitar solo in "The Tension" that comes out of fukkn nowhere. Very good, as advertised. (Robert) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, deadtankrecords.com, asidbateri.bandcamp.com)

ASTMA / MARS96 – *split* – Art-damaged No Wave weirdness from the German/Russian duo ASTMA, a live set that spans more than twenty minutes and takes "free form" to dizzying heights. Russia's MARS96 deliver smart guitar driven alt/punk, a heavy ear towards AmRep but with a focus on inward discordance and overall sonics. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, spinarec.net, spinarec.bandcamp.com)

BACKWARDS MESSAGE – This demo might actually be lesser than the sum of its parts. Fierce, commanding, snarling vocals and a massive hollow bass dominate the recording, the songs are mostly mid-tempo bangers with hooks only when necessary (and good hooks at that). The guitar, though barely noticeable for the most part, stops by occasionally for some legitimately killer leads and melodies, so we're good…right? But even after three back-to-back listens, there's nothing about this demo that grabs me. Sometimes it seems like BACKWARDS MESSAGE are actually a stoner rock band fronted by a hardcore dude who writes all their songs. But it's ugly, and I like things that sound ugly, so I'm gonna keep listening. (Robert) (13-song cassette, lyrics not included, backwardsmessage34@gmail.com)

BAD TASTE – *Cult Status* – BAD TASTE reminds me a lot of the FLESHIES around the era when they made the album *Kill the Dreamers Dream*, which I love and consider a big compliment. Fast-paced punk with dashes of garage and rock'n'roll, held together with bouncy guitar chords and hard hitting drum parts that pop, while the singer adds the icing on the musical cake of scream singing. You know, the kind when they're kind of yelling but having too good of a time to actually scream? Totally tight, good job BAD TASTE. (Wreckage) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, jbriceevans@gmail.com, P.O. Box 1663, Bloomington IN 47402)

BIG SUZE – This banger was recorded in 2013, but time is weird, man, so here you go. Buffalo's BIG SUZE are only quasi-active now that their made the career shift to Olympia and joined WHITE WARDS, but I can assure you that one listen to this demo will make you wonder if it isn't a little rust dust that makes that rainy Northwestern band so damn good these days. Fuzzed-out, driving punk ("Enthusiasm") that effortlessly shifts gears to early '90s filthy dirges ("Cranium") and dishes out burners as well as any of the kids on the block ("Septic Truth," the brilliant "Stunted Brain"). Plenty of (the good kind of) grunge seeping through just about every crevice, but there can be no mistake about the demented outsider approach these mutants take to their punk. I don't care if it's two years old, and I don't care if I'm hearing it for the first time tonight…because I'm hearing it, you dig? (Robert) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, drugparty.org, drugparty@drugparty.org)

BLANK BODIES – Raging hardcore from Denver. Sick riffs, relentless attack, and constant teasing for fans of The Breakdown—BLANK BODIES hint at the mosh but just deliver the rage. Four burners and a MECHT MENSCH cover, killer shit. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, Mark M., 1145 Corona St., Denver, CO 80218, blankbodies.bandcamp.com)

BOG BODIES – *Could She? Could You?? Grope Swollen Whispers Of Ghosts From Erogenous Zones Past???* – Next level weirdness, space age, lo-fi drum machine bedroom noise punk with vocals tweaked into an under water robot and complete irreverence towards anything sacred about punk…or "music." There are surely songs buried in this nonsense (and sometimes you can even hear them), but Calgary's BOG BODIES are more interested in getting weird, which they are really good at. (Robert) (11-song cassette, lyrics included, bogofbodies.bandcamp.com)

BOG BODIES – *The Malignancy Is Coming, The Polyps Are Here* – Second tape release of deranged electronic punk from this Canadian project. Not sure if this is a band or solo project, but it's pretty cool in a "sounds like it comes from another planet" kind of way. They seem to take basic punk/hardcore structures, toss in some KMFDM, quirk out the drum beats to their fullest extent, and then chop and modulate the fuck out of literally everything. The insert in this tape smells rotten – did you guys spray some weird ogre pheromones on this thing? This is the music of a frantic nightmare. (Matt) (11-song cassette, lyrics included, bogofbodies.bandcamp.com)

CHAOS ORDER – *Regulus* – Hard and raw combination of melodic southern metal, NY hardcore, SHITLIST and BOLT THROWER. Some areas are whirling noise epic drone-core. Some areas sound like AUS-ROTTEN being flailed with chains over a scrapyard. Solid political messages in content. In short, this is quality parts Pollock and Bacon oil paints. High contrast metal, abstract without being uneven, and gruesome hardcore. (Jason) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, occultrecordings.bigcartel.com)

COLOR TV – Remarkably catchy junk punk from Minneapolis. Very JAY REATARD in production and DICKIES in flavor with some of the spastic energy of the BRIEFS. Certainly teeters on douche bar post-9/11 fake attitude rock at times, but remains punk and filthy in overall laydown. Great demo, and if things amp up without the careful leads to wait up moments this shit could be stinking on fire. Looking forward to their 7" that's coming in a couple months. Favorite moments: the whirling dervish effects at the end of the tape, outro with *Pong*-like missile command. Keeps it weird and begs to be flipped. (Jason) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, colorteevee.bandcamp.com)

COMPASSION FATIGUE – *Six Rotten Awfuls* – Rotten filthy noise punk with everything blown to shit except one undistorted guitar, which sounds really weird. Drummer spends the first song trying to keep up (unsuccessfully) and then leaps out of the gate for the second, which is weird. This is a foggy, distorted mess, which is obviously a compliment. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, rottenawfuls@gmail.com)

CRAP – Noise punk, meet space rock. I mean, the black clad noise rockers that didn't go goth (the

easier fashion shift, obviously) seem to be pretty set on making shit as weird as possible, and CRAP is a brilliant example. Beyond fukkd noise punk, with actual songs being positively tortured and manipulated and twisted to shit. Closer to torture than anything I'd call music, but CRAP succeed by keeping everything constantly interesting, intentional…and listenable. This is smart shit, I'm intrigued, and I want more. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included *[man, are they ever]*, crapnotmusic@gmail.com)

CRUELSTER – Ugly, pissed punk from Ohio with no redeeming social value. Simple, driving punk songs with a mutated, puking singer. Are they singing about power outlets and being dumb fucks?? I don't fucking know! I don't care! Neither do their fans, who are crawling out trash cans to go buy this…or, more likely, clicking over from their interview on Vice.com. What-the-fuck-ever. "W" symbol made with hands. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, morepowertapes.bandcamp.com)

DIKTAT – It's an old truism that the best hardcore sounds absolutely timeless, but in this case it's a canard that holds true. DIKTAT have produced a good long old school style demo of hard-fucking-core that could easily have come out of the '80s as the mid-'00s. If I had to pick an influence it would be the Scandinavian scene due to the TOTALITÄR drive, raw vocal and early ANTI-CIMEX riffage but there's a ton of other stuff to pick up on, especially the POISON IDEA rock'n'roll licks that pop up now and then and the busy BGK bass. The drumming is absolutely stellar, always driving the songs and carrying a ton of breaks and hectic without every being overplayed. This is a demo that's already way better than most bands' first EP, can't wait to hear more! (Andrew) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, diktat@riseup.net)

DISSIDENCE – This is new school hardcore death metal with accomplished guttural vocals. Reminds me of NYC contemporaries TRENCHGRINDER, though I wish DISSIDENCE picked up the pace at times. Some interesting drum licks and tons of modern death metal double bass pedal punctuation. Think Sweden's INCISION or NYC's IMMOLATION. That ferocious combination of urban dank venue hardcore and Scandinavian death. Lyrics and socio-political statements about the environment, a right to one's body, war and rape. As a powerful three-piece, Erin, Austin and Ryan switch between death-crust hardcore and metal with a fluid drop of the hammer. As a demo, the production is grand. (Jason) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, brainswell.bigcartel.com)

DYING – *Broken* – Fucking dark, angry hardcore, delving at times into metal territory, and I fucking like it! Songs alternate between tempos, mid to fast being the most predominant, and all the while the drummer throws in fills with perfect timing to keep it interesting, and the breakdowns do not disappoint. This is the kind of music that is perfect for an epic mosh pit, or for being fucking furious that we live in such a tragic, oppressive world. (Wreckage) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, hydrogenmanrecords.com)

FLECKT PETS – *This Is Our Punk* – First things first, this album's CD cover is hand-collaged with newspaper cuttings (phrases such as "Mick so slick" and "fella hates my porn addiction" being some of the fridge-magnet-style aesthetic), and a note that came with the CD informed me that they are handmaking all of their album covers. I personally when so much of our culture and surroundings are digitally made and laser printed, it's pretty cool when someone is sitting on their floor with scissors and glue and spending time making something with their hands, for you to enjoy no less. Kudos FLECKT PETS. An important question struck me when I put this CD on, what exactly is a fleckt pet? Either way, this is a pretty cool album. Melodic guitars and vocals are nicely sandwiched between almost dancey drum and bass, and the singer manages to sound sarcastic and snotty most of the time, which all and all gives them kind of an old school feel, like bands released by Rough Trade in their early days, their sound similar to the BUZZCOCKS or GANG OF FOUR, which I really dug. The exception was the song "Religion," since it has more of dub/reggae feel, and in my notes I wrote "dangerously close to rap-rock." (Wreckage) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, flecktpets@gmail.com)

FRIGHT EYE / MONOLITHS – *split* – MONOLITHS play slow to mid-tempo degenerate punk akin to the sound of FLIPPER, but if FLIPPER had been invented after hardcore instead of before it. The vocals are yelled and blown-out. Free flowing, almost psychedelic, guitar solos bubble to the surface. Heavy, driving drums and bass emerge from the shadows for the last track, "horse," which sounds like it is dragging a cart full of boulders up a hill (in a good way). Who can't identify with that? The FRIGHT EYE side is dirty punk rock'n'roll with plenty of fuzz. The upbeat, almost bouncy, melodic bass lines are the soft side of the velcro, with lyrics like "in a world of shit, in a sea of hate," providing the scratchy plastic grit. The guitar riffs are also pretty catchy and contrast with alternating moments of fuzzed out pop minimalism. Both bands are from Denmark and sing in English. Definitely something to check out if they come your way on tour. (Heather) (9-song split cassette, lyrics not included, facebook.com/the-monoliths, frighteye.bandcamp.com)

GORILLAXMONSOON / VEXED – *split* – Fiery youth crew hardcore from GORILLAXMONSOON and rarely does this brand of 'core pack a punch like this. Definitely dirty, and maybe a little rough around the edges, but listen to "Nothing More" and tell me the fire doesn't still fukkn burn. Now, speaking of burning fires, seems someone lit one in whatever undies VEXED are wearing today, because they are hot as *shit* on their side of this tape. Relentless PV assault, feedback whining over the menacing slow riffs, with lyrics (and delivery) that are every bit as grim as the music implies. This is the actual sound of intensity, and it sounds amazing. People who like honest hardcore need to get this. Immediately. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, xeroxrecords.bigcartel.com)

GRANDMA'S BOYFRIEND – *Let Me Let You Let Me Go* – Stripped down sugar sweet pop tunes. Kinda like a power pop vibe but without the power, ya know? Laid back, kinda like walking around with your headphones on and smiling…but singing a bit when (you think) no one is looking. It's shameless, it's successful, and it's also the final release for GRANDMA'S BOYFRIEND. (Robert) (12-song cassette, lyrics not included, grandmasboyfriend.bandcamp.com)

GROUND – *Under* – Thick, burly, low end hardcore/PV from New Jersey. Music is pissed and pretty fukkn good, but with song titles like "Dyke Spike Domestic Goddess" and "CUNTsumer," you need to include lyrics…and since you didn't, it makes me wonder about tracks like "Hate When You Speak" and "Slave To Me." So yeah, the tunes are ill, but the jury is out on the band until I figure out where these bros are coming from. As disclaimers go, that seems pretty fair, no? (Robert) (14-song cassette, lyrics not included, groundnj.bandcamp.com, lifesucksdie.bandcamp.com)

GURR – Snazzy, sharp, bass driven bangers from Germany-based New York transplants. Rather impossible to keep the mind from wandering towards K and Simple Machines, even if the vibe here is less indie and more energetic than that might imply…but I feel like GURR would have fit right in twenty years ago. Fortunately, they also fit right in right fucking now even better. "Where Did You Go?" is the hit, but the whole tape is full of winners, pop tunes masked as stripped down punk. Into it. (Robert) (11-song cassette, lyrics not included, gurrband@gmx.de, drugparty.org)

HELLS – Heavy guitar driven noise rock in the very, very '90s sense. Lots of UNSANE, JESUS LIZARD-esque lurks, but interpreted with modern hardcore sensibilities and songwriting. Very good. (Robert) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, hells-band.bandcamp.com)

HORSE AND DEER – Every bit as insane recorded as they are live, Tokyo's HORSE AND DEER obliterate six tracks on this 2010 recording. Like, they don't *play* the songs…they *slay* the songs. Start/stop Japanese hardcore/fastcore played with lightning speed and devastating proficiency… oh yeah, there're rock'n'roll parts too. Fans of NICE VIEW, SENSELESS APOCALYPSE, JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS and the like take note, and punks on the West Coast get ready, because these kids are paying us a visit in September. If you want an explanation of their name (which is actually kinda brilliant), then let me know, but do *not* snooze on this band. (Robert) (6-song CDr, lyrics included, hidezi-100@mail.goo.ne.jp)

HOSPITAL BOMBER – Really ugly downtuned HC/PV with blown-out vocals that dominate the whole recording. Maybe it's accidental, but there's some serious West Bay Coalition worship going on here, but with extra attention paid to the slow motion punishment. Shit is sick, disgusting, and I'm pretty sure I never need to hang out with these dudes—I just need them to record more jams. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, lifesucksdie.bandcamp.com, bombmgh.bandcamp.com)

IGNORANTES – *Olor A Cuero Rancio Vino Y Raja* – Crude and pulsing punk from small-town Chile. I notice many bands going for the chaotic tupa-tupa/pogo punk sound, and while the aesthetics and spirit are often there, they usually lack the natural grit and passion that can be heard on this tape. Anyone with the least bit of interest in raw '80-'90s Latin American punk should easily connect with this. Also it's pretty clear by now that you can always count on the quality and intentional output by CV Recs. (Matt) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, CV Recs c/o Rafael Manrique, 1184 East 13th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5T 2M1 / Canada)

ISRAEL REGARDIE – *Tu n'es Personne EP* – Very reminiscent of BLESSURE GRAVE and POPULATION, leaving behind the sharp edges the can often come with deathrock and instead taking us by the hand into a sickly beautiful, whimsical place, where the singer and their deep and calming voice acts as your guide. The synth is distinct in adding to the all around pretty, goose pimple-inducing vibes of the music, but not predominant enough for me to want to describe this band as solely darkwave or synthwave, since the all around package really is true to early deathrock roots. I highly recommend getting this, especially if you happen to be a creature of the night. (Wreckage) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, israelregardielyon@gmail.com)

KNOW-SO – My first thought when I put on this tape is that it sounds like a long lost, very rudimentary DEVO demo, so I wasn't thrown off when they covered "Be Stiff" at the end of the tape. This isn't a carbon copy though. Everything sounds beautifully blown out. There's a shitty drum set barely hanging on to the beat. A hardly-distorted guitar. Things lurch along or sound like they're getting thrown against the wall. It's good. Go for it. (Greg) (6-song casstte, lyrics not included, turbinepiss.blogspot.com, turbinepissrecords@gmail.com)

KOLUMNA BURRUTI – From the mastermind behind Peruvian raw punk bands DHK and RATAS RABIOSAS comes this solo project. Rather than relying solely on the D-beat template, he incorporates a rough and growled vocal approach that makes me think of some old Swedish bands like SVART PARAD or ASOCIAL. Toss in a healthy dose of classic Latin American punk and you get an ugly sounding and compelling batch of punk songs. Lyrics are in Spanish but some have English titles like "Coca Cola Is Shit" and "Make Your Zine." (Matt) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, CV Recs, 1184 East 13th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5T 2M1 CANADA)

LIMBS BIN / TWO MILLION TONS OF SHIT – *split* – Prolific abrasive-hardcore-as-industrial-insanity maniac LIMBS BIN continues his relentless assault on all things tuneful with "Halloween 2014," an all out shitstorm of cacophony and chaos and noise. Take all of the instruments out of hardcore, replace them with rage and isolation, give the mic to a gentleman named Josh, and you have LIMBS BIN and this is perhaps their most punishing release to date. TWO MILLION TONS OF SHIT have released two splits: this one and one with SETE STAR SEPT…so you should know what you're getting yourself into. This release is not for the faint, but it is definitely for me. Pure noise, pure chaos. (Robert) (2-track cassette, lyrics not included, followmetothelasereye@gmail.com)

LITOVSK – I don't know if I've heard the '80s dark punk regurgitation thing done as well as this…ever. So I guess I should say: "good job" to LITOVSK, because you are killing it. The distant vocals are on point, and the jangling guitars are flawless. Maybe I wish that every band I have never heard of was throwing up modern versions of the music I listened to when I was a teenager…but then, the bands I listened to when I was a teenager didn't make music that was as good as this, so I guess I should say: "thank you." Also, singer kinda sounds like Richard Butler, so there's that. This demo is stellar. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, symphonyofdestruction.bandcamp.com)

LONG GONE – Demo *MMXIV* – There is floor-punching in Finland. LONG GONE is heavy barking hardcore, the ilk of early TOXIC NARCOTIC and DARKSIDE NYC with edgy breakdowns and jangly bass. Distorted and heavy, can I call it LACK OF FINNTEREST? Throw in some grudge-era intros for a unique beatdown hardcore revival. This is the stuff of dark double kick pedal and windmill kicks in the basement of Bond St Café in the early '90s, with OUT OF LINE, NEGLECT and DEMIZE on the bill. But this is from [quiet] Finland where the people may not speak all day. The cover art is an ominous tree skyline, not your typical hardcore tape, this looks more like ULVER with the serious sonic intimidation of INFEST. The brittle Scandinavian crust in the lungs vocals reminds me of DISCARD at times. And if the production was any better I probably wouldn't like it as much. Killer stuff. (Jason) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, xbezerkerrecordsx.bigcartel.com)

LUNG – One man bedroom stoner/doom from Berkeley, leaning towards psychedelic jams. While it takes a track or so to sink into the demo quality recording, there's some seriously cool shit hanging out on this disc. NOOTHGRUSH, (early) SLEEP, and SWAMP WITCH fans will want to take note. While LUNG is pretty damn solid, this kid is only seventeen…so I can only imagine that there are really good things on the horizon. "Of Tooth And Claw" is a legit killer tracks, no qualifiers required. (Robert) (5-track CD-R, no lyrics, lung520.bandcamp.com, fnoodle3@gmail.com)

MARION WALKER – It's possible that this is more than one song, but who really knows? MARION WALKER plays an eleven-minute mass of music that all flows beautifully in a psych-rock haze. I'm reminded of shoegaze and hints of early MY BLOODY VALENTINE without the troublesome ego that permeated those worlds. Female and male vocals intertwine throughout to create otherworldly harmonies that captivate and enchant. Got it? Good. (Greg) (1-song cassette, lyrics-included, casinotrash.com)

MARS96 – *Cancer* – Extremely prolific St. Petersburg noise rock band—in addition to countless EPs, they released a series of poorly recorded CD-R demos corresponding to Zodiac symbols. Weird. *Cancer* features almost covers (like a band who wanted to jam it out at practice but they only knew the one riff and they just drug it out forever) of "Now I Wanna Sniff Some Glue" and "Whole Lotta Love" and a nonsensical No Wave thing that never goes anywhere (which is probably the point). (Robert) (3-song CD-R, lyrics not included, mars96.bandcamp.com)

MARS96 – *Capricorn* Same introductory description as above, but this one really sounds like Lou Reed on heroin for the first track, and then "Deneb Algedi" busts out one of the coolest track I've heard this review cycle (and definitely the most memorable of the twenty or so MARS96 songs I've heard today). A discordant, rhythmic attack that sounds more like an actual *Confusion Is Sex*-era SONIC YOUTH. "Dabih" closes the demo like a chaotic epilogue to the previous track, a furiously droning monotony that starts with high tension and maintains throughout. Glad that I listened to this demo last, because it's the best. (Robert) (3-song CD-R, lyrics not included, mars96.bandcamp.com)

MARS96 – *Libra* – Same introductory description as above, but this one sounds like six-year-olds banging on instruments. Or art students. Or Lou Reed on a lot of heroin in 1971. (Robert) (5-song CD-R, lyrics not included, mars96.bandcamp.com)

NARCOESTADO – Well this one came along just in time with some much-needed hooks in my tape-reviewing session. These guys have written some stellar melodic punk tunes that you can really get down to. Steady rhythms hold it down while the guitars and vocals deliver some ultra-contagious melodies. Not goth or post-punk at all, but far more depressive in tone than poppy. This comes from some Mexico City folks who play in TERCER MUNDO, MUERTE, MUJERCITOS, and RATAS DEL VATICANO, so you know the standard is high. This is the best tape I've heard this month and I really hope they have some more hits in them for a future release! (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, CV Recs, 1184 East 13th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5T 2M1 CANADA)

NO BUSINESS – *Mind Machine* – This is the second tape by these East Bay punks. I like it. I liked the first one too, but this is better. The songs sound a lot more focused and confident in ways that allow them to start some songs off in basic, rudimentary ways, but build them up into something that commands your attention. By saying "basic and rudimentary," I don't mean to slight them because they just use it as a brief stepping stone to catapult their songs into another realm. My favorite song on here is the title track, which slows down to a creepy crawl and gives off a vibe not unlike X's "Nausea." I like that they use elements of rock and surf in the same ways as classic '70s punk without ever sounding retro or fucking cheesy…and never once dipping their toes into that wretched genre known as "bar punk." They also cover Denmark's BRATS. Excellent tape. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, nobusiness1.bandcamp.com)

PADLA BEAR OUTFIT – *Sunday Morning Tapes* – Drugged-out devotional garage/indie space jammers from St. Petersburg might not seem like the way you want to spend your day, but I can assure you that by the time the brownies kick in about halfway through the almost ten-minute opener "Neblagopol" you will wonder why you ever thought about spending your day any other way. Truly freaked out sounds, truly great sounds. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, spinarec.bandcamp.com)

POLYON – *Three Songs* – Straight up, this sounds like music that was on "alternative" radio stations when I was growing up in the '90s. Total SMASHING PUMPKINS worship alternative shoegaze, although their website says fuzz pop, which works too. While the musicians play pretty indie with only the slightest aftertaste of electric abrasiveness, the singer will often stretch a note, letting it fade in fuzzy reverb (example: "and wooooaaaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh"). Highly recommended for a make out session or for when you are leaving offerings at your all-things-'90s altar. (Wreckage) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, polyonmusic.com)

THE POTATOES – *Everyday Is A Gift* – The POTATOES are a lo-fi, indie bedroom project from Detroit, employing a super tinny drum machine and a clean guitar. The tape quality is poor and keeps cutting out but I honestly can't tell if it's part of the aesthetic or not. All of it sounds on the brink of collapse, like even the drum machine is gonna give out. Overall though, there are some tender sounding, lo-fi pop songs happening here. Bedroom four trackers should seek this one out. (Greg) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, joshuajeromebrooks@gmail.com, 1327 Joliet Pl, Detroit, MI 48207)

POWERTRASH – *Two EPs* – This recording blends vocals obscured by delay and reverb, drum machines, live drums, guitar, bass, samples, and a variety of synth sounds. One track dives into a disorienting wash of vocals and harpsichord-style synth over minimalist vintage drum machine clicks and pops. The following track centers around bass and tripped out, echoey, droning guitar. The other side of the tape has a song made out of chopped and degraded '70s funk which could easily pass as noise, but would also feel at home on live late night pirate radio. This band neither loves music, nor hates and seeks to destroy it. It has so much apathy and ennui, which is either the core sentiment it is trying to communicate to us, or is the roadblock preventing them from making a listenable recording. It's a close call. Maybe I'm just not high enough. (Heather) (cassette, lyrics not included, blacklodge89@gmail.com)

RADIATOR BABY – Lo-fidelity, irreverent, bare bones garage punk. Distant vocals, fuzzed

out guitar and zero fucks given. (Robert) (14-song cassette, lyrics not included, hamplandry@gmail.com)

RATHAUS – *Rathaus Rathaus* – High energy, distorted, chaotic wall of punk sound from New York. Layers of instruments fill every possible corner with sound, so you kind of have to jump in or plaster yourself up against the wall. The vocals are consistently aggressive although sometimes in a borderline silly way. The high end of everything is turned way up, which puts the cymbals and crunchy guitar tone up front. The instruments have a best-friend-band quality, mixing together and bouncing off each other to create a unified wave of chaos rather than sounding like a bunch of weirdos freaking out individually in a room together. (Heather) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, rathaus.bandcamp.com, rathaus.tumblr.com, rathausrathaus@gmail.com)

SIGNO XIII – *Fata Morgana* – It took me a minute to warm up to this and understand what was going on, but one song in I realized it is croony, melodic post-punk that is not played in a hurry whatsoever, instead taking you on a slow ride through a dark landscape of tunes. I'm really into the way the delicate keyboard parts complement the heavy guitars. Also, does one of the songs have a xylophone? SIGNO XIII would normally be a band that I would get into, but I think the problem for me was that it was too clean and melodic which left me longing for more rawness, which would have complimented their dark sound. Two rad covers of awesome classics were a big plus, one being JOY DIVISION's "Disorder" and the other being "Tainted Love" by SOFT CELL. (Wreckage) (7-song CD-R, lyrics included, bandasigno13@gmail.com, signo13.bandcamp.com)

SKINDRESS – *Sporadic Addict* Noisy outside garage punk with a keyboard acting more like a noisemaker. A few burners, but the primary vibe here is deliberate downtempo damage. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, skindress.bandcamp.com)

SLUGBUGS – *Wanna Be Slugbugs* – Keyboard heavy slogs that lumber and lurch, kinda like an accidental horror punk band. Murky and mysterious, like a tape that just dropped in from a long dead space punk journey. The tape was tired and it wanted a beer, so I played it and we drank. And then "Cake My Face" blew out of my speakers and I was pretty stoked. (Robert) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, Emmy Ramone, 2656 Dayton Ave., Columbus, OH 43202, emmyeatsbutts@gmail.com)

SPACE IS HAUNTED – Guitar/drum duo from New York, SPACE IS HAUNTED make simple plodding punk songs more than just compelling. They make them really, really good. There are hints of what could be a brilliantly good shoegazing fuzzed out melodic band, but these kids are too tough for that, in spite of positively gorgeous vocals that hover above most of the tracks. Attitude stripped straight from the '90s, guitar at the start of "Gone" is legitimately sicker than anything else in the rag this month—give 'em some 'ludes or acid and maybe they'd start sounding more spacey, but I'm guessing these girls drink beer. Fukk man, "Gone" is such a killer track. More, please. (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, Bitchface Records, 359 Parkdale Ave., Buffalo, NY 14212, bitchfacerecords.storeenvy.com, spaceishaunted.bandcamp.com)

THISCLOSE – *Chapter III* – This band confuses me. To model your band after the most unlistenable era of a band who has had, if you're honest with yourself, more unlistenable records than listenable ones? That's bold move, son…bold and arguably stupid. But with this four-song cassette teaser for the *Chapter III* full-length on SPHC, THISCLOSE make it known that they are all in…and I mean *all* in. Simple metal riffs and falsetto vocals that would make 1983 Sunset Strip boys moist with jealousy… the band is little more than punk riffs presented as third-rate butt rock. I know that "Just Around The Corner" is an actual banger…but mostly I just don't understand. I mean, I understand what they are doing, but I don't understand why. And yes, I understand *Why?*…but I digress. (Robert) (4-song cassette, no lyrics, no contact info)

TOTAL DICKS – You sent in a blank tape. Good work, dicks. I did you a solid and listened to the fucking bandcamp page, like a goddamn commoner. Dumbshit, straightforward ugly punk songs that are all over in about a minute or less. Zero riffs. I already can't remember anything about it. Shit punk. (Greg) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, 2048 N Albany, Chicago, IL 60647, highfasionind.storeenvy.com)

URUTU – A São Paulo outfit with lots of metal riffs, but rooted more in the punk/MOTÖRHEAD camp. The self-indulgent rockin' guitar leads provide more fun than cheese in this instance, and vocals have a gutsy and powerful quality. Zero points for originality, but ten points for good tunes and good times. (Matt) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, urutu.bandcamp.com)

UV-TV – You know something is good when you listen to it twice in a row and you're still staring a blank screen, unsure of what to type. UV-TV manages to create some light and warmth in my least favorite town in the US. Jangly, reverbed out guitars float over solid pop summer-feeling jams. The vocals sometimes remind me of GRASS WIDOW without the over-arching three part harmonies…maybe it's just the reverb talking, though. It's sparse and then lush in all the right places, but still basks in the glow of a lo-fi recording. I don't know what else to tell you besides this is great. (Greg) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, highfashionind.storeenvy.com)

VIDEO DUCT – *Anti-Human Hate* – Ugly, raw, pissed-off, fucked up teenage punk from the 'burbs of southern California. On 99% of the songs, these dudes just play one unchanging riff for the entirety of their lurching, ultra lo-fi punk mess while some furious mutant screams over it. Very rudimentary. Extremely punk. A total mess. (Greg) (11-song cassette, some lyrics included, 2048 N Albany, Chicago, IL 60647, highfashionind.storeenvy.com)

ZAP – *II* – Here's some more degenerates from that NWI scene over there in the (kind of) middle of the US. Good basic, fast hardcore riffs with a singer who takes it over the top. This is definitely in the same killer vein as most of the shit coming out of there these days, but it's not as immediately captivating as some of their peers. If you're looking for the blazing lo-fi hardcore of the Midwest that always sounds best in basements though, you are looking for this tape. (Greg) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, 396 Greendale Drive, Valparaiso, IN 46385)

V/A – *Bordeau Boredom Volume 1* – Fucking hell, this is definitely a case of "fuck the review, buy it for the names attached," as this nifty cassette complies tracks from the cream of the crop of the French scene across a range of styles. GASMASK TERROR's evolution from crust titans to MOTÖR-punk madmen has resulted in a constantly engaging discography and the three tracks the contribute to this compilation are fucking killer head-banging anthems, especially "We Don't Need their Respect." HONDARTZAKO HONDAKINAK (aka HONDA HONDA) are obviously *MRR* faves, having contributed one of the standout tracks on the *Sound the Alarms!* compilation and they're in fine form here, howling vocals leading the charge against stripped-down and razor-sharp tunes that seem way thicker than a three-piece should be able to deliver. BRULURES are new to me but made me a believer in about sixty seconds with the sick lead break in the middle of "Poison," delivering a vicious dose of fast and burly hardcore that betrays more than a hint of Japanese influence in the preponderance of melodic leads and beefy backing vocal shouts. FACE UP TO IT! practically qualify for "elder statesman" status at this point, having toured widely and been around since the '90s. These sharp tracks are a bit darker and more raw than I remember them being, and are all the better for it. (Andrew) (bordeauxboredom.bandcamp.com, mankind.olympe.in)

V/A – *Have Fun Or Don't #2* – Noisy, raucous live show recorded earlier this year at Legion Of Doom in Columbus, and featuring five bands I've never heard of: YUZE BOYS, CHUD, SLUGBUGS (reviewed in this section), LAFFING GAS and STENCH CONSULTANTS. Sounds like a really chaotic time was had by all, and I think STENCH CONSULTANTS are my faves. If you don't like audio chaos, then you do not need this cassette tape. (Robert) (?-song cassette, lyrics not included, Emmy Ramone, 2656 Dayton Ave., Columbus, OH 43202, emmyeatsbutts@gmail.com)

V/A – *Segregation Anxiety: Chicago Punk 2013* – A time capsule, as the title suggests, of punk in Chicago from a couple of years ago. Obviously with any city this large you are likely to have several micro-scenes, and *Segregation Anxiety* does a great job of bridging subgenres. CEMETERY, POPULATION and STARING PROBLEM should already be known to many readers, while DIE TIME crank out relentless bass/drum hardcore, KRANG are ripping thrash/death, MORAL VOID play crushing D-beat, DECAY AFTER DEATH crank out top tier speed metal…. HAWAIIAN PUNCH, SLAG, MAC BLACKOUT BAND as well. I guess since this one is two years old, Volume 2 should be in my hands very soon. A fella can dream…. (Robert) (14-song cassette, lyrics not included, occultwhispers.bigcartel.com)

V/A – *Shake! Sampler II* – This is a fantastic comp tape put together by Shake! Records. 28 tracks by a variety of bands may introduce you to some new favorites, and all of the bands being really good makes this a sweet treat for your tender eardrums. Some of the bands are LAB COAST, who have kind of a FRESH AND ONLYS feel; PSYCHOSIMATIC ITCH sound possessed by the spirit of the BUTTHOLE SURFERS; the B-LINES mix twitchy LE SHOK style guitars with catchy drum beats and angsty, the-world-is-shit vocals; ZEN MYSTERY FOG cool things down with bummer/chiller vibes similar to NERVE CITY or CROCODILES; MONSTER TREASURE will woo you with lady powered twee comparable to the DUM DUM GIRLS; the CATHOLIC GIRLS will inspire you to do some gothic aerobics; and the SURPRISE PARTY will bust out a ouiji board to conjure the sound of the DOORS while jamming out bubblegum/psych garage rock, plus much, much more. You should definitely get your cute hands on this tape. (Wreckage) (28-song cassette, lyrics not included, experienceshake.com)

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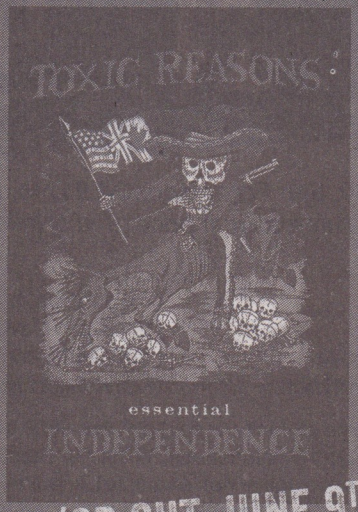

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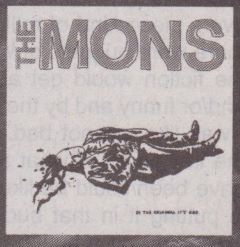

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(KC) Kyle Canyon
(LA) Lydia Athanasopoulos
(MM) Marissa Magic
(MR) Mikey Minicomix
(OG) Oscar Gutierrez

0002 ODNOM #0
42 pgs
I kind of really dislike the formatting of this and how it's introduced and presented. I spent about the first paragraph or so on every piece kind of rolling my eyes but then there were nuggets of wisdom building up or the fiction would get absurd and disturbing and/or funny and by the end for the most part I was like, oh not bad. The theme is about the imagining of what a cyber utopia would have been/could be like and I think the fault is putting it in that bucket. If this had been presented as a bunch of writing by different writers musing about the internet and the future and technology and personal politics and what not, or even just brought up with no introduction I think it would have been more enjoyable. Instead I found myself constantly trying to understand how everything fit into the thesis statement, if you will. (MM)
siriusexfem@gmail.com

ANARCHY: A JOURNAL OF DESIRE ARMED #76
$10 / 68 pgs
Six book reviews and one longer essay make up this installment. The work of Albert Camus and a liberal take on the Occupy protests may be the better-known works. The others wouldn't be widely known outside radical reading circles—the collection *Disruptive Elements: The Extremes of French Anarchism*; *Spectacular Capitalism* and *Precarious Communism*, both by Richard Gilman-Opalsky; and *Ready For Revolution: The CNT Defense Committees in Barcelona* by Agustin Guillamon. The longer piece is an attack on "Identity Politics," capitalized as such by the author. The writer emphasizes all the things this critique is *not* going after—that "oppressions along identity axes are sociologically real," and that radicals "seek[ing] to regenerate a force of becoming" (whatever that means) are not being discussed. Still, many of the arguments here I found wanting. The writer—as do most *Anarchy* contributors—leans heavily on the work of Max Stirner. As described here, this means devaluing ascribed roles (things you're born into, like ethnicity or sex) and prioritizing each individual's uniqueness. What I'm hearing is that white folks (for example) shouldn't get called out for cashing in on their privilege, because the individual white person is distinct from the category of whiteness, which is privileged. That's wack. Overall the article seems to prioritize a person's unique self over their social characteristics. Repressive social apparatuses aren't gonna judge you by your love of dancing or favorite playwright, but by how you present. And privilege does come at somebody else's expense. I remain underwhelmed by this journal. (JM)
C.A.L. Press, PO Box 3448, Berkeley, CA 94703 / anarchymag.org

BEHIND THE WHEEL #2 (PILTDOWNLAD #10.5)
$5 or trade / 56 pgs
Nicely printed zine, with digitally rendered photos of the San Francisco landscape. Notes from an Uber/Lyft driver, because we are dying to know what it's like to be a scab taxi driver. I learned a lot from reading this. Now I have nothing but complete contempt for the riders of the "ride-sharing" economy. To me it seems that people are too obsessed with using their phones for everything. Of course not all Lyft or Uber drivers are middle class, but enough of them are that the tag line for one of these companies is "it's like getting a ride from a friend," I think, assuming, that people who use Uber and Lyft are not friends with immigrant cab drivers. And people just love their fucking apps, don't they? The unregulated aspect is a subject of a long essay, but I will say here that the drivers do not have the same burden of taxes and certification that cab drivers are subject to, which is partly what seems to be driving the taxis out of business. I used to think this was a boring issue, like I also don't care that people don't use phone books anymore, but of course there is nuance to everything. At any rate, Kelly goes into some stories about being at the shit-end of the service economy, driving obnoxious drunk people around, and how it barely pays the bills and is totally grueling work…plus if you drive for Lyft you are supposed to greet your passengers with a fist bump! So we are not surprised that ride-sharing companies exploit the workers. He talks about gentrification, the changes that San Francisco is going through, and the tech boom. He's not a bad writer, and I found myself engrossed even though I would not expect to be…with very short stories that have no room for character development. (JB)
Kelly Dessaint, PO Box 22974, Oakland, CA 94609

CINNAMON INSANITY #2 / TRY TO WAKE UP WITH A SMILE ON YOUR FACE! #8
30 pgs
Cinnamon Insanity/Try... is a split zine based out of Germany, but fortunately for me, written entirely in English. The zine starts out with introductions from both authors, and you can tell both writers care a lot about the other as well as their respective zines, which I found really sweet. The zine starts with the second issue of *Cinnamon Insanity* whose author Ephi mentions she hasn't made a zine in "literally years." After a few paragraphs I was really glad that she is finally back—keep it up Ephi! She takes us on a stroll through memory lane at a time when she was supposed to take a trip to South Korea, but instead ended up getting severe abdominal pain and spending her vacation in the hospital. Fortunately she is able to make friends with other patients, as well as getting plenty of visits and support from her circle of friends, making a shitty experience a lot less shitty. Ephi repeatedly makes light of the entire experience, but I feel like a lot of the grit and emotions I would expect someone would have of what she went through was left out, and that resulted in it being kind of dry to read. That's not necessarily a bad thing, though, but I felt it would have humanized the reading experience for me more. Throughout the story Ephi sprinkles the handwritten text with various illustrations and comics, and as a comic "artist" myself, Ephi's drawing skills are very impressive, I hope that in the next issue she will make them bigger so that us readers can get a better look at her work.

Following the hospital story is a brief piece on feeling like she's wasting her life at a stupid job instead of doing what she wants in her life, which I think the majority of us can relate to, as well as quick read on the anatomy of the vagina and vaginal ejaculation.

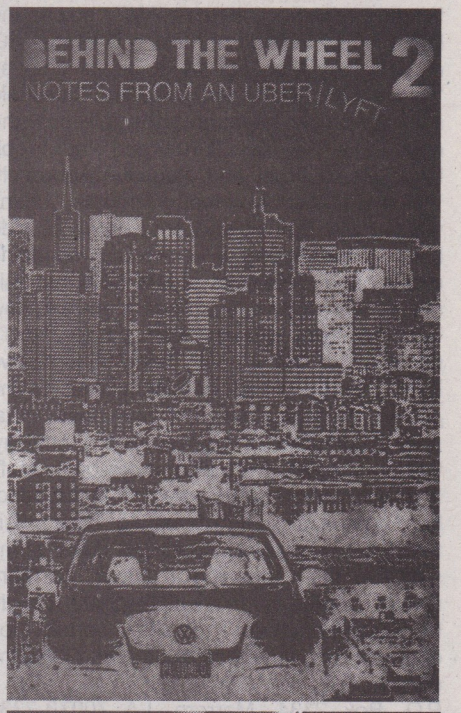
Try To Wake Up With A Smile On Your Face! starts right in the middle of the zine and has a lot more of a cut-and-paste look in the first few pages, where author Chriz starts out by talking about music that helped him feel confident in his decision to have a drug-free lifestyle, as well as a one page blast from the past comic from a 1988 Crucial Youth album also about being posi and straightedge. What follows are various written pieces about road trips, 9/11, and growing up in Berlin with the wall, all of which are relatively short, as well as some fanzine reviews and a piece about being a punk parent and what that means for Chriz. This piece is the one that struck me the most, since parenting is hard in general, but with punk parenting there is so much to think about (like not believing in hierarchies, but the parent-child relationship being somewhat hierarchical). Overall I enjoyed *Try...*, but the focus on being posi all the time kind of rubbed me the wrong way. I think embracing and feeling your feelings, be they "bad" feelings such as depression or "good" feelings such as happiness, is important in knowing yourself and accepting yourself, but with that said it probably doesn't hurt to have someone around to remind us to look on the bright side. (HW)
ephilog.com / posicore@baerenhor.de

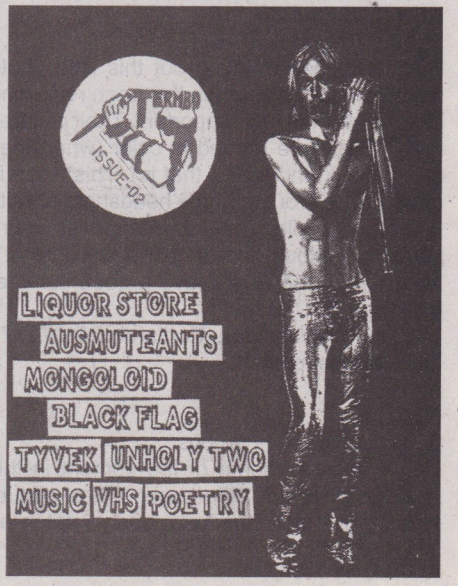
FUNNY THINGS TEENS SAY AT WORK
$2 US, $3 world / 16 pgs
This zine is a collection of some of the funny things the author has heard while working at a homeless shelter for teens in Portland. Although it's not gut bustingly hilarious, it is tasteful, kinda cute, pretty funny, and a good quick read. My only gripe is that it's pretty damn short, sixteen pages with basically one little quip per page. I bet thirty dollars he could have chock this little old zine plum full of zingers, maybe a little insight, a depressing tale or two, and just plain old wildness. It is good, though. Pretty funny. (DZ)
7503 N Kerby Ave, Portland, OR. 97217 / brybry@riseup.net

NOWHERE TO GO BUT EVERYWHERE
24 pgs
Karoline Hanson Collins has been a presence (behind a camera and otherwise) in punk for decades, but somehow this is her first photozine. What took ya so long, Karoline? This is great! Make another! Now please! This was put together for Conquest for Death's recent tour of Mongolia, China, Korea, and Japan and documents previous travels by that band to Botswana, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, South Africa, and more. The band formed with the express purpose of seeing parts of the world they had never been to before—where often *no* North American punk bands had ever been before—and Karoline has been along for much of the ride, making photos of the band, the audience members who come to see them, and the cities and venues they find themselves in. Her photos of the band are great, but my favorite parts of the zine are her portraits of the people they encountered along the way—the caped Cannibal Corpse fan on the back cover, the intimate portrait of a Malaysian man with an "I Don't Love You" face tattoo. This little booklet came into the world because her friends encouraged her to make it—tell your talented friends to share their talents with the rest of us! A little encouragement can go a long way. Karoline's photographs—of punks, and of daily life here in San Francisco—are often humorous and poignant in a way that this zine only begins to explore. I hope that she'll make a publication of her non-Conquest for Death related images soon. (GA)
theroadiegirl@gmail.com / flickr.com/theroadiegirl

NUTS #16
$2 / tabloid newsprint
Happy sweet sixteen to everyone's favorite oversized newsprint zine, *Nuts!* The reason I love this project is because it always feels like a celebration of friendship. That makes it sound like some posi bullshit, but this is neither that, nor is it cliquish and insidery. A mélange of punk activity, the mag is of course centered on Ben's home of New York. (Though this magazine's Julia Booz provides a mini Bay Area scene report, touching on G.L.O.S.S., Keith Haring, and the state of the mosh!) We get interviews with Anahit of Nandas ("What do your parents think about your band?") and Vanity ("You have an LP planned that is half acoustic and half electric. Why?"), comics from Laura PallMall, Sheer Mag explaining Sheer Mag, and art contributed by a variety of New York scene stalwarts. Plus an extra insert—8.5 x 11" photocopied Break Up Survival Guide!!!!!!!!!! The layout is, as ever, slightly maddening, but as a result I find myself discovering a new tidbit every time I return to these pages. *Nuts!* never fails to remind me of the joyful, weird, and wild parts of punk, a jolt that I am always grateful for. (GA)
PO Box 1959, New York, NY 10013 / nutsfanzine.tumblr.com

PARANOIZE #36
$2 / 20 pgs
Another good issue of this New Orleans-based zine. This one covers a good group of local metal and hardcore bands from Louisanaa as well as Vicksburg, Mississippi's power-violence/sludge act, Criminal Slang. In fact Criminal Slang's interview is really cool as they mention their weirdest thing they've seen at show. I'll just say it has to do with Instagram during a Capitalist Causalities show (Yikes!). Also, in here is the wild D-beat wrecking machine known as Gasmiasma (featuring members of Down/EHG & Crowbar) who I had *never* expected to make something quite





this crusty/powerviolence-y. Hell, they sound like a NOLA version of fucking D-Clone! But maybe they wouldn't be cool" to crusties 'cause of their metal pedigree? The Classhole interview made me laugh, especially near the end where they say "[Drummer] Paul Webb loves Celtic Frost and Negative Approach. The rest of us only listen to Triumph." I can't wait for Rik Emmitt and co.'s hardcore side band. Super heavy & very NOLA-sounding metal band, Gristnam are in here but this interview's pretty basic "band members now vs. then/release/shows" stuff. Finally there's Ossacrux, a verrry rippin' band. Good gawd I just listened to their bandcamp and it's the *perfect mix* of crust and first wave death metal (à la Master, Deceased, Repulsion). Anyway, their interview covers erm, more basic stuff, like "band name meaning/who's in the band" but it comes off pretty interesting. Their music reviews are straight-ahead and cover some stuff I've been meaning to check out more myself (Acero Letal, Vatican Dagger). It might be a cliché but there's the still important idea of "supporting your local scene" and this zine does exactly that. (JD)
P.O. Box 2334, Marrero, LA 70073-2334 / paranoizenola.com / paranoizenola.bandcamp.com

PLASTIC BOMB #90
€3.50
Another month, another issue of *Plastic Bomb*, and another time the stupid Amerikans here at *Maximum Rocknroll* have to say, "I can't read German, *waaaaah!*" This month's edition features Napalm Death, Zex, Neon Bone, Plasgida, and more. You can find that information yourself on the internet. If you are a German-reading punk living in the continental United States (or better yet, the Bay Area!) and you are interested in critically reviewing German-language fanzines for us, rather than just rattling off a list of contents, please, please, please get in touch: mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. (GA)
plastic-bomb.de

RESTLESS LEGS #10
$4 US, $5 world / 32 pgs
Bryan has been putting out this little photo magazine for longer than I've been reviewing zines here. That feels important. Their pictures in this issue are printed in color (when they aren't black and white, that is). This issue is mostly middle of the frame headshot portraits of cute people with asymmetrical weird hair and various nose rings. They cute. It's nice. It must be nice. Have a good summer everyone. (EC)
7503 N Kerby Avenue, Portland, OR 97217 / brybry@riseup.net

STAMINA
$6 US, $10 world / 56 pgs
Here's a list of some of the content in this zine, you decide…The cover has a picture of a woman who has been badly beaten up with no explanation, an article about being 40 but still kick'n ass and wearing a "denim vest jacket," an article explaining "DIY (Do It Yourself) publishing," a listicle of what your woman really means when she says things like "fine" or "whatever," cannabis butter recipes and a word search with the word zine in it a bunch of times. There's a write-up on the band Fidlar as well as a write-up about a porn star in which she is praised for her teen like appearance and good looks. There's an examination of survival communities, and the types of people one should surround themselves with in an apocalyptic situation. There's an address where you can send two dollars and your personal info to receive eBooks on various subjects such as: NSA leaks, CIA classified info, black magic and terrorism. So yeah, if you find yourself having to constantly "ask a punk" then maybe this zine is right up your alley. (KC)
diy-publishing.com / diy-publishing@att.net

TERMBO #2
$6 / 34 pgs
Unstoppable new media conglomerate Terminal Boredom continues their hostile takeover of the periodicals market with this, the second installment in the new print organ of their vast commercial empire. Nothing but essential content in this issue: Portland's darlings, the arguably-unfortunately named MONGOLOID elucidate their STL origins and describe the creative process behind their artistic triumph, the *Birth of the Slam Pig* cassette. AUSMUTEANTS provide touring outsider's perspective on the culinary offerings of the continental United States and lead you to wonder what other disgusting garbage you've consumed in the course of your isolated existence here. LIQUOR STORE are gross but probably perfectly charming in person — that's New Jersey for you (sidebar: it's another all-male issue, but if you read the review this far that might not be surprising). The "regular content" here continues to impress, as we get into second installments of recurring *essais* on the contemporary output of Black Flag and the unceasing punishing reality of Blockbuster-era video retail. I no longer work at a miserably lethargic office job where I get to read the sprawling *Termbo* reviews page as I wait for the phone to ring for hours on end; the condensed reviews section (*only good shit*) is perfect for the discerning snob who "doesn't watch TV" or pay Comcast bills. Oh yeah, also a complete overview of the recorded output of Detroit's Tyvek. I'm not going to describe every single piece of content in this zine, since you should buy it and read it immediately. Of course it's cut, pasted, and printed with impeccable taste. Now that's what I call a "Rocknroll" zine; we don't stand a chance. (EW)
301 Tremaine Ave, Kenmore NY 14217 / thelokilabel.storenvy.com

TRIGGER
$4 / 14pgs
I'm always excited to see large group endeavors come to fruition. *Trigger* is the output of a collective of seven editors and potentially more contributors. The subtitle of the mag is "A Journal of Catarealism and Speculative Sexuality." I've seen people go through these periods in their lives, in subculture, in mass culture where we are constantly trying to re-dress how we understand sex. *Trigger* seems to fit in to this. When we talk about all the different ways sex can be we get excited. Then we follow that reality to its eventual dead end brick wall: sex serves production and rarely serves each other. At least in the ways we hope. Sure sex mixed with real friendship and intimacy might be different but I have learned the hard way: you cannot fuck yourself to liberation. *Ethical Porn* is the green consumerism of 2007. The stories contained within are lofty. One is an attempt to field some kind of gender ambiguous sexual inspirational speaking and it's as disappointing and probably unintentionally hilarious as you can imagine. Another text mixes state violence, growing up in a Catholic cult, and mommy issues into a bizarre romp through someone's inner hell. I guess you could maybe jerk off to this. The paper is big and the text is complicatedly laid out on an entire page which would be hard to deal with one handed. Perhaps this isn't supposed to make you want to fuck maybe it's intended to make you think. I believe I exceeded that expectation. I'm bored but at least there's Judy Bals comics to make you laugh. Oh yeah, I liked the nontraditional sex objects reviews, too. (EC)
3124 Shattuck Ave, Berkeley, CA 94705 / catarealist@gmail.com

TRUST #171
€3 / 68 pgs
Packed with writing, and not many ads for the size, *Trust* covers a fair variety of the "punk/hardcore/underground." There are a few columns and plenty of reviews, including some English-language zines (from the Philippines and the USA) reviewed in English. The larger format allows for better photography reproduction, and there are some cool shots. A history of the band the Hold Steady appears, along with a write-up of Ex Hex. Interviewed ware Norwegian "Riot Grrrl Punk Rock" Lucky Malice (here in the US, we don't see many riot grrrls with Turbonegro shirts|), the punk/hip-hop group Alte Schule Masthorn, and Mahlstrom. The tour dates will be long-gone by the time you see this. The little I could read I did appreciate—here's to many more. (JM)
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PLANNING FOR BURIAL
IRON GAG
JULY 24TH @ THE GRAND VICTORY

BASSOON
HELLRAD
JULY 26TH @ THE GRAND VICTORY

NEUROSIS
BROTHERS OF THE SONIC CLOTH / SUMAC
AUGUST 9TH @ WARSAW

THE DUPPIES
REGGAY LORDS
AUGUST 19TH @ THE GRAND VICTORY

the World/Inferno Friendship Society
HALLOWMAS - OCTOBER 31ST @ WARSAW

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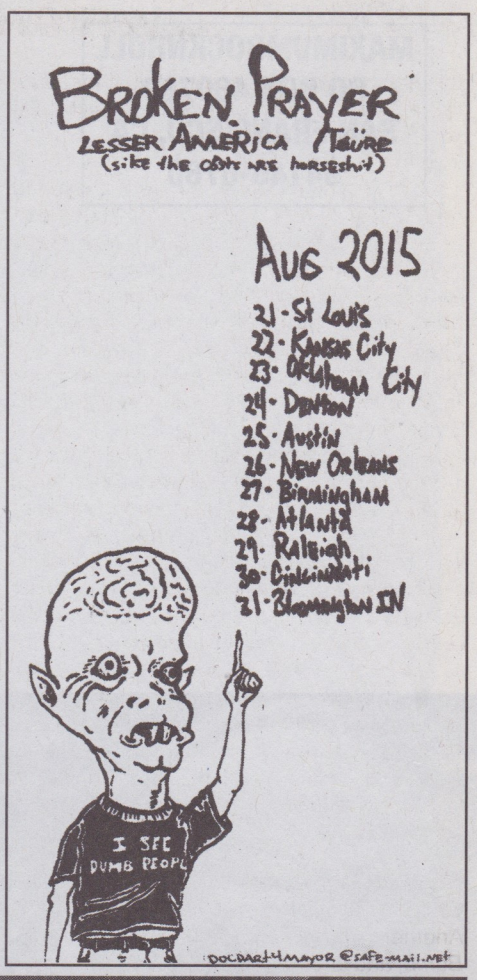

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